

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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# Concordia Theological Monthly

*Published by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*

EDITED BY THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY  
ST. LOUIS, MO.

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CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is published monthly by Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo., to which all business correspondence is to be addressed.

\$3.00 per annum, anywhere in the world, payable in advance.

Entered at the Post Office at St. Louis, Mo., as second-class matter. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 5, 1918.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.







## Reconciliation and Justification

By MARTIN H. FRANZMANN

Since the Fall the original relationship between God and man is destroyed. The free communion of Paradise, sustained by mutual love, has been changed to enmity. Man henceforth lives in an estrangement from God and in enmity toward God. The whole bent of his mind is diametrically opposed to God, and the whole course of his life is a progressive and climactic contradiction to his Creator. Of and by himself he cannot get back to his God, nor does he want to. If he is to be helped in his blindness and his perversity, he must be rescued, saved. Our help must lie *extra nos*, for sin and guilt are henceforth our lot, are the given fate of humanity.

In His holiness and righteousness, God can have nothing in common with sin. God can only be wrathful and punish. The express will of God, the Law, demands of man a complete agreement with itself: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22:37, 39.) God's Law demands, and God's Law punishes (Gal. 3:10): ". . . it is written: Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them." This demanding and punitive will of God is addressed personally to every individual man ("thou," "everyone"), and His wrath inexorably strikes every transgression: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against *all* ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. 1:18). Consequently all men are sinners, accountable to God, and under His wrath, under the curse of His Law. All the world is guilty before God (Rom. 3:19). We are "*by nature* children of wrath" (Eph.

2:3). "*Lex enim semper accusat*" (Apology IV, 38). The Law is the letter that kills.

The way from man to God therefore is blocked, and every attempt on man's part to ascend to God is only an intensification of his revolt against God. For the wrath of God, God's punitive will against sin, must be satisfied. And this satisfaction no man can render, and no man wills to render. The initiative, impossible and incredible as it may sound, must lie with God. "*Item, es wird gelehrt, dass GOTT DER SOHN sei Mensch geworden . . . dass er ein Opfer waere . . . und Gottes Zorn versoehnte*" (Conf. Aug. III).

The Atonement is the high-priestly work of Christ, true man and true God. The Atonement, accordingly, is an act of God, who is therefore both the wrathful One and the Expiator, both the insulted One and the Propitiator. Both the initiative and the carrying out of the work of the Atonement are His.

This indissoluble unity of God and Christ is clearly expressed by St. Paul in 2 Cor. 5:18-21: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead: Be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." It is God who hath set forth Christ Jesus to be a Propitiation in His blood (Rom. 3:25). The Lamb which takes away the sins of the world is the *Lamb of God* (John 1:29). It is the blood of the *Son of God* that cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). It was God's eternal counsel before the foundation of the world that "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself" (Eph. 1:5). Perhaps the most incisive expression of the fact that the Atonement, and redemption generally, is the work of God is to be found in the words of St. Paul to the elders of Ephesus, where he speaks of the "church of God which He hath purchased *with His own blood*" (Acts 20:28).

It is not a matter of redispensing an angry deity as in paganism.

The grace of God meets us in Christ Jesus. This grace is the cause and the origin, not merely the result of the incarnation of the Son. But the holiness and righteousness of God are nevertheless full reality. The Law of God is His serious will. His wrath is not a mere illusion on the part of guilty man, but a divine reality—the inevitable reaction of His holiness and righteousness against sin and the sinner. And this wrath had to be satisfied: "Even God's grace proceeds on holy ways" (Althaus).

Our Confessions do not expressly emphasize the fact that the Atonement is God's deed; and yet there is no real shift in emphasis over against the witness of the New Testament. For the First Article of the Augustana speaks of "*Gott Vater, Gott Sohn, Gott Heiliger Geist, alle drei EIN goettlich Wesen.*" The Third Article of the Augustana, just quoted, is very explicit on this point. And in the Apology Christ is spoken of as "*qui DATUS EST pro nobis . . . et POSITUS EST mediator ac propitiator.*"

No dogmatic formulation has absolute value. None is really indispensable, and every formulation of a fact of Biblical revelation necessarily involves some loss; some of the fullness and of the living freshness of the Biblical proclamation is sacrificed. What is gained in sharpness and clarity is gained at the cost of warmth and life. One might think of the relationship between formulated dogma and Biblical proclamation as that which exists between a map and a landscape. With these reservations, however, one is inclined to call the formula *satisfactio vicaria* truly a classic one, for it so emphasizes the manner of atonement that the central and decisive aspects of the manner of the atonement are clearly seen and felt. The formula cannot and should not replace Scripture, but it can serve to summarize and recall Scripture.

The formula *satisfactio vicaria* takes seriously the presuppositions of our atonement. It takes cognizance of the fact that man is altogether a sinner, that he is guilty before God, that he is a debtor, burdened with an impossible debt; a debt, moreover, owed to One who has every right to say: "Pay Me that thou owest."

The formula also deals seriously with the nature of God, the Holy and Righteous, who has nothing in common with sin, who cannot compromise with ungodliness and unrighteousness, whose

wrath is a dreadful reality, a reality about which man dare not have any illusions, a wrath which is revealed "from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. 1:18). This formula does not evade the Law of God, God's exacting and punitive will, the Law that reveals sin, provokes and intensifies sins, and curses and condemns the sinner; and therewith the formula remains true to the testimony of Scripture, the testimony that God came to man and in coming to man dealt punitively with sin. In the light of *satisfactio* God is no "good-natured old man." His righteousness is not called into question, and the bright beams of His holiness remain unclouded. He is both "just and the Justifier" (Rom. 3:26).

The *satisfactio* formula is also a faithful confession to the manifold Biblical utterances concerning the life, sufferings, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although the many figures in which the redemptive act is pictured cannot be all reduced to one formula, yet the *satisfactio* thought is true to most of them and to the more central of them.

It is true to the figure of redemption, of ransom. "For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The thought of the price paid and of its value is especially emphasized in 1 Pet. 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." Compare also Titus 2:14, where "gave Himself for us" and "that He might redeem us," standing in relation of cause and effect, are mutually explicatory; and the very precise ἀντίλυτρον of 1 Tim. 2:6: ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων. The idea of "price" or "payment" is clearly associated with λύτρον, ἀντίλυτρον, and the simplex λυτρόω; the context in Heb. 9:12 strongly suggests that it is also associated with λύτρωσις. The flat statement, so often met with in commentaries, that ἀπολύτρωσις means simply "emancipation, release," with no suggestion of "price paid," is, in view of the associations of the whole word group, startling; the context of Rom. 3:24-25, Eph. 1:7, and Heb. 9:15 makes the association of "price" and "payment" with ἀπολύτρωσις almost inevitable.

And the many passages in which ἀγοράζω and ἐξαγοράζω are used to describe Christians as "bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Gal. 3:13; 4:5; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9; Acts 20:28) leave no doubt in the matter.<sup>1</sup>

The same holds for the figure of the high priest and sacrifice, which is often closely connected with that of the payment of a ransom, although this is no longer, strictly, a figure, but rather the reality, to which the type of the sacrificial cultus pointed. This thought is so central that the redemptive work of Jesus has been called His high-priestly office; and rightly so, for the whole New Testament takes up the Old Testament idea of sacrifice and sees it realized and fulfilled in Christ. John the Baptist points to Jesus as the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). At the institution of the Lord's Supper, John Himself interprets His death as a sacrificial death, Mark 14:24. So also Paul in 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:24-26. In the Gospel according to St. John (17:19) we read: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself."<sup>2</sup>

According to St. John, Jesus is Himself the "Propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2). God "loved us and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). And in the Apocalypse the exalted Christ is the Lamb that has been slain (Apoc. 5:6), whose worthiness consists in this: "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Apoc. 5:9).

In St. Paul, besides the references to the Words of Institution and their sacrificial import, 1 Corinthians 10 and 11, we find Christ in His atoning death pictured as the Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), as the propitiatory sacrifice provided by God (Rom. 3:25); the deed that shows His love is this: "Christ . . . hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God . . ." (Eph. 5:2).

In the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, Christ is the High Priest *κατ'*

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 327: "When anybody heard the Greek word λύτρον, 'ransom,' in the first century, it was natural for him to think of the purchase money for manumitting slaves." On the following page Deissmann dryly observes: "I refrain from entering into a criticism here of the remarkable obscurations and complications which this whole circle of ancient popular metaphors has undergone at the hands of modern dogmatic exegesis."

<sup>2</sup> For the sacrificial implications of ἀγιάζω see Ex. 13:2; Deut. 15:19 (LXX).



*exochen*, who as Priest and Sacrifice performs the expiation of our sins once and for all. The sacrificial-expiatory note is sounded by St. Peter, too, who speaks of Christ as of a "Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19); as one "who His own self bare our sins in His body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). Now, the general concept of expiation is that of a performance *that makes good* (*gutmachende Leistung*). Thus the sacrificial aspect of the redemptive act comes under the general head of *satisfactio*. The image of purification, too, belongs to the sphere of sacrifice and expiation and so can without violence be brought under the heading of *satisfactio*. In Titus 2:14 we note the close connection between "gave Himself for us" and "purify"; in *Hebrews* the cleansing is by blood (Heb. 9:14, 22-23); so also in 1 John 1:7: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"; and even in Eph. 5:26, the bridal metaphor leads to the idea of cleansing.

Where Christ's death is viewed as a penal death, the *satisfactio* idea is paramount and obvious. The Word of the Cross is a Word concerning One who, having become sin and a curse for us, died as a criminal, under the wrath of God and forsaken of God. Here the punitive will of God is satisfied. Similarly, the life and death of Christ, viewed as obedience, point in the same direction (Rom. 5:19; Phil. 2:6 ff.; cp. also Heb. 5:8; Gal. 4:4; John 4:34; Matt. 3:15). Here satisfaction is rendered to the exacting or demanding will of God.

Accordingly, when the Augustana defines "*propter Christum*" more closely with the sentence: "*qui sua morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit*," it has found and pregnantly expressed the heart of the Atonement (Augustana IV). When the Formula of Concord adds the active obedience of Christ (Epitome III, 3; Solida Declaratio III, 9), that is an expansion of the thought, but no distortion of it, for the whole life of Christ was a life of obedience "even unto death" (John 4:34; Phil. 2:6 ff.).

In the satisfaction the redemptive work of God meets us in all its comforting severity; it is a comforting severity, for "the terrified conscience could not understand the good news of the Atonement if that good news were not at the same time a testimony to this concrete way in which God has effected the Atonement. Every other form of atonement would evoke no response, would not be

understood by man in his need.”<sup>3</sup> In the little word *vicaria*, on the other hand, we see all the sluices of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God opened for us in their surpassing fullness. This word recalls for us those words of Scripture which attest the death of Christ as the spontaneous act of His love: “I am the good Shepherd. . . . I lay down My life for the sheep. . . . No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.” (John 10:14-18.) “Christ hath *loved* us and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor” (Eph. 5:2).

The thought of the vicarious nature of Our Lord’s suffering and death needs no detailed demonstration: in redemption, in sacrifice, in the thought of Jesus’ death as a penal death, wherever the blood and the life of Our Lord and Savior are spoken of, the *pro nobis* is heard again and again. Werner Elert has expressed it more chastely and more beautifully than is given to most of us to express it:<sup>4</sup>

When Christ carried His voluntary humiliation even to the deeps of death (Phil. 2:8), a death in which the wrath of God spent itself upon all that is man, He was acting “even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings” (Matt. 23:37) to turn the threatening peril away from others upon Himself, as the shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:12). In so acting it was His wish to die for others (Mark 10:45), and the whole New Testament with consenting voice declares with grateful recognition and in manifold metaphors that He has done so.

The effect of the death of Christ consists, then, in this, that the wrath of God is thereby, by His death, turned from the others: ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς (Rom. 5:9).

The *vicaria* thought is clear in the whole realm of imputation, as in the use of the prepositions ὑπέρ (e. g., 2 Cor. 5:21) and ἀντί, and in the thought embodied in “Son of Man” and that of Christ as the antitype of Adam, Christ as the representative of all humanity, whose death is the death of all: “If one died for all, then were all dead” (2 Cor. 5:14). Therewith we have already touched upon the completeness and sufficiency of the redemption.

The completeness and all-sufficiency of the atoning work of Christ cannot be stated too strongly. The work of Christ is exten-

<sup>3</sup> Luthardt-Jelke, *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, 15th ed., 1948, p. 326.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Lehre des Luthertums im Abriss*, Section 25.

sively complete: in all that He did and suffered, Christ acted and suffered for the whole world, for all men. His work is intensively complete: by Christ's suffering and death the world was actually reconciled with God; that is, God's wrath against the world was actually done away with, was satisfied and removed. God no longer imputes to men their transgressions. And finally God has ratified the whole of His work, has declared it perfect and complete by raising Jesus from the dead. For if Christ was delivered up for our offenses, He was raised for our justification. To put it crassly, "the account is closed."<sup>5</sup>

Scripture designates as the recipients and beneficiaries of salvation "the world" (John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:19), "the whole world" (1 John 2:2), "all" (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:6); and when St. Paul in Eph. 2:16 speaks of "both" (Jew and Gentile), he is indicating the same universality of salvation. The all-inclusiveness of the atoning work of Christ is most strikingly seen in a passage like Col. 1:20, where "all things . . . whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" are mentioned as the object of "reconcile unto Himself." Reconciliation involves the whole universe, man and his world (cp. Rom. 8:19 ff.). This universality of salvation is by no means abridged or called into question by the fact that occasionally "many" are spoken of as the recipients thereof instead of "all." For on the one hand, "many" is used to point the contrast with "one" (Rom. 5:19); on the other hand, "many" is often used in distinction from those who by unbelief and disobedience shut themselves out from the actually realized and universally offered reconciliation. The Latin of Augustana III is especially emphatic in expressing the universality of the scope of Christ's work: "*ut reconciliaret nobis patrem et hostia esset non tantum pro culpa originis sed etiam pro OMNIBUS ACTUALIBUS HOMINUM PECCATIS.*"

An old (1883) Report of the Southern District of the Missouri Synod has expressed the intensive sufficiency of the Atonement with unusual vigor: "The Holy Spirit writes through St. Paul, 2 Cor. 5:14: 'We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were

<sup>5</sup> Cp. Pieper, *Dogmatik*, II, 410—411, of which the above is a free reproduction.



all dead.' By the sufferings and death of Christ the sins of all men are as completely and perfectly expiated as if all the thousands of millions of men had themselves endured the eternal pangs of hell. The result is: God is perfectly reconciled with all men and with each one of them. No man need do or suffer anything additional in order to reconcile God, to obtain righteousness and salvation. And Holy Scripture testifies to this expressly; we read 2 Cor. 5:19: 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.' That is, at that time, 1,900 years ago, when Christ fulfilled the Law for men and suffered the penalty of their transgressions of the Law for men, God reconciled man to Himself. We must fix our eyes upon these simple, clear words of Scripture and let them work on us."

Therewith we have touched upon, and in part anticipated, the question sometimes raised concerning the equivalence of Christ's sufferings and death, the question whether His sufferings and death are really sufficient to atone for the sin and guilt of all mankind, or rather, how they can be deemed sufficient. This question is touched upon in Scripture only insofar as the only other conceivable way to righteousness and salvation, the way of the Law, is declared to be excluded by the death of Christ: "If righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21). In general, the question is dangerously close to that other question, which St. Paul never answers, but always indignantly rejects: "Is there unrighteousness with God?" (Rom. 9:14.) When, for instance, Elert seeks to solve the problem by stressing the fact that God in His grace *accepts* (*laesst gelten*) the expiation, or when Jelke emphasizes the voluntary character of the sufferings of Christ, they are both emphasizing aspects of Scriptural truth, and they have safeguarded the spontaneity and graciousness of God's act, but they have not gone any farther toward explaining the equivalence of Christ's suffering and man's guilt. It is better to rest content with the revealed fact that Christ, in what He has done and suffered, has actually taken the place of all mankind and that God has thereby actually been reconciled, that Christ's work as our High Priest is extensively and intensively complete, and to draw the obvious inference that the question of equivalence dare not be a question for us. The holiness and righteousness of God, which are involved

in that question, are ultimate mysteries before which the believer bows down to adore.

According to the "simple, clear words of Scripture" the Atonement is a present fact, "is *there* before all activity on man's part and independently of it. It is an accomplished fact, like the creation of the world. Rom. 5:10: 'We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son'; then, when Christ died, the Atonement came to be. As the death of Christ lies behind us in time, so also the effecting of our atonement."<sup>6</sup> In Christ God is so disposed toward men that the fact that they have provoked Him to wrath is as if it had never been; it is as if God and man had never been at variance.

If God no longer imputes our sins to us, He has acquitted us, He has absolved us of our sins, He has forgiven us, He has justified us. We speak of *objective justification* as well as of objective reconciliation. The expression, if not the thing itself, has often been questioned. To insure mutual understanding, two things should be noted in this connection.

First, our point of departure is the thought that no sharp line is to be drawn between Reconciliation and Justification, that both terms refer to the same act of God in Christ. For Pieper, for instance, "objective reconciliation" and "objective justification" are practically interchangeable terms. And Althaus' note on *Versoehnung* in his *Roemerbrief* has the same tendency: "The two terms correspond to each other and designate the same event. The term 'justification' is taken from the sphere of law, the term 'reconciliation' from the domain of personal relationships. Their material identity is clear from the fact that Paul at one time (2 Cor. 5:14-21) can proceed from reconciliation to justification and at another time from justification to reconciliation." He concludes: "Reconciliation is actualized as justification; justification involves (*bedeutet*) reconciliation." We go one step farther and say that with the reconciliation the actual absolution of the world's sins has taken place. And we feel sure that we are not exceeding the bounds of Scripture or of our Confessions in so speaking. How closely the two terms are related in the Epistles of Paul has

<sup>6</sup> Pieper, *Dogmatik*, II, p. 411.

already been noted. We should note further that the great lapidary statement of objective reconciliation in 2 Cor. 5:19: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," is followed immediately by "not imputing their trespasses unto them." A comparison with Rom. 4:6-8 makes it clear that "not imputing sin" is equivalent to "imputing righteousness," i. e., to justification, so that justification is given in and with reconciliation; the one is as real and objective as the other.<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, it is not our intention, in speaking of objective justification, to make the concept "static," to relegate justification to some cool region beyond the humanity that is to hear and receive it. We are thinking and speaking no more "statically" than Luther speaks when he says: "The work is done and accomplished; for Christ has acquired and gained the treasure for us" (Large Catechism, III Art., 38). Our concern in speaking of objective justification is rather to keep justification altogether personal. Teachers like Stoeckhardt, Engelder, and Schaller emphasize the *comforting* character of objective justification: the sinner is to know of a surety that God had him, just him, in mind and in heart when He delivered up His Son for the sins of the world and pronounced His judgment on the sins of the world; universal grace, universal salvation, objective justification are not to be so thought of or so preached that the individual appropriation of that salvation be left out of sight; Christ, they insist, has not died for the world *in abstracto*, but for each individual in the world. Though we distinguish between objective and subjective justification, it does not occur to us to *separate* them. We can subscribe to the words of Schrenk when he speaks<sup>8</sup> of the "*Heilsobjektivitaet*" as "*rettende Beziehungsobjektivitaet*." And we agree with him when he says: "To be justified once and for all in the cross and to be personally justified, these two facts are not to be separated." We do not speak of two justifications; objective and subjective justification refer to the same act of God.

"The work is done and accomplished; for Christ has acquired

<sup>7</sup> Windisch speaks in his commentary on 2 Corinthians (*ad* 5:19) of "die Versoehnung als Erlass einer umfassenden 'Generalamnestie.'"

<sup>8</sup> In Kittel, *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum N. T.*, s. v. δικαιωω.

and gained the treasure for us. . . . That this treasure . . . might not lie buried, but be appropriated and enjoyed, God has caused the Word to go forth and be proclaimed, in which He gives the Holy Ghost to bring this treasure home and appropriate it to us."<sup>9</sup> This Word is brought home to *me* and is appropriated to *me* by the fact that the Holy Ghost creates faith in me. God's verdict of acquittal upon the sins of the world becomes God's verdict upon me by the fact that I believe it. So it is that I am justified *by faith*.

Our dogmatically exact definitions of faith are intended solely to establish the meaning of faith as the receiving and accepting of the gracious acquittal pronounced by God, to safeguard the δωρεάν, to give τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι the glory. Thus, even "dry" formulations become a song in praise of God the Reconciler and God the Justifier of the ungodly.

Saving faith has as its object the Gospel. That means, since the Gospel is God's good news "concerning His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord," that faith is faith in Christ, in His work of vicarious atonement. Faith in the Gospel is not faith in a thing, be it idea, principle, or teaching, but faith in a Person and an event of continuing, world-changing power and significance.<sup>10</sup>

Saving faith is *fiducia cordis*. Since the content of the Gospel is not only historic past, but a continually redemptive present, a living relationship to it cannot be a mere *notitia historiae*, a mere acceptance of the history as true history. "*Fides est non tantum notitia in intellectu, sed etiam fiducia in voluntate, hoc est, est velle et accipere hoc, quod in promissione offertur, videlicet reconciliationem et remissionem peccatorum*" (Apology IV, 183).

Saving faith is *fides specialis*. The Man upon the Cross, the Atonement, concerns *me*. "*Haec igitur fides specialis, qua credit unus quisque sibi remitti peccata propter Christum, et Deum placatum et propitium esse propter Christum*" (Apology IV, 45).

Saving faith is *fides actualis*: "a continuous act, whereby the Christian, asleep or awake, seizes upon the forgiveness of sins in

<sup>9</sup> Luther, *Large Catechism*, Art. III, 38.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. Stauffer, *Theologie des N. T.*, p. 137: "Der antike Begriff des Evangeliums fordert zum Inhalt ein geschichtliches Ereignis, das eine neue Welt-situation herauffuehrt. Der nt. Begriff des Evangeliums hat zum Inhalt das Christusereignis, das eine neue Welsituation heraufgefuehrt hat."

the Gospel" (Luther). And yet this faith is no work, no performance on man's part: "Faith carries us outside ourselves, outside our own heart, and leads me to Christ" (Luther). Faith is the utter renunciation of all performance, the worship which receives, as our Confessions put it.

As such, the faith which justifies is solely instrumental. Faith is, in the telling formulation of Schrenk, "*lauter Bezogenheit auf die Heilstat.*" Faith is accounted righteousness in virtue of its content, in virtue of what it receives. This *vis receptiva* of faith is especially evident in the use of the prepositions that connect δικαιοσύνη and πίστις: St. Paul speaks of righteousness ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως and ἐκ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, but never of a righteousness διὰ τὴν πίστιν. Faith is an instrument, an ὄργανον, but an instrument of passivity and receptivity, an ὄργανον ληπτικόν.

If justification is by faith, it must be by faith *alone*. Even if the *particulae exclusivae* were not in the Bible, even if the Scriptural polemics against the "works of the Law" did not underline the free grace of God in justification, even so, from the very nature of faith, the *sola fide* would be justified. For the only possible correlative to the gift of God is receiving and accepting; the only possible correlative to χάρις is πίστις.

# The Origins of the Object-Subject Antithesis in Lutheran Dogmatics

## A Study in Terminology

By JAROSLAV PELIKAN

### I

One of the tasks with which both Christian preaching and Christian dogmatics are confronted is the attempt to express Biblical testimony in non-Biblical terminology. Such an attempt is as difficult as it is necessary. In order to perform its responsibility, the proclamation of the Christian message in preaching must resort to ways of speaking that are not found in the Scriptures. Similarly, theologians have always found it necessary to collect into one expression what is said in several different parts of the Scriptures. But the difficulty in any such expression is that a word taken over from extra-Christian sources may often bring with it connotations that are foreign to Biblical faith. That necessity and that difficulty are almost exactly parallel.

In their definitions and discussions of the meaning of the Christian faith the great Lutheran dogmaticians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were faced by this fact. From the example of the ancient Church it was evident to them that theology could not avoid the use of a *vox ἀγγραφος* to summarize a particular Biblical doctrine.<sup>1</sup> And as Lutheranism came into conflict with various sects, it had to insist that not all dogmatic terms appear *expressis verbis* in the Scriptures, but that they are nevertheless justified as summaries of what the Scriptures teach.<sup>2</sup> Professor Pieper has pointed out in this connection that we have the heretics to thank for the fact that the Church has had to invent these terms.<sup>3</sup>

Several examples of such terms suggest themselves. The term *sacramentum*, practically indispensable in theology, is a *vox ἀγγραφος*, having its origins in civil law.<sup>4</sup> In the latter part of the seventeenth century it seems to have become necessary for Lutherans to point out that it was not the Lord Jesus, but Tertullian, who had



first called Baptism a *sacramentum*.<sup>5</sup> Another such term is *persona* as used in the doctrine of the Trinity; though there were some who regarded *persona* as a valid translation for ὑπόστασις in Hebrews 1:3, the fact remained that the ancient Church had coined a dogmatic terminology for which it was not always easy to find Biblical equivalents.<sup>6</sup> In the same connection, the term *essentia* as applied to God also created difficulties.<sup>7</sup> All three of these terms — *sacramentum*, *persona*, *essentia* — were necessary; but they also constituted a problem for the careful dogmatician.

That problem became even more acute in the case of those terms which do not summarize a particular doctrine, as do those referred to above, but which are rather employed as methodological devices in the exposition of all Christian doctrine. Among the most familiar methodological devices of this latter sort in Lutheran dogmatics are the Aristotelian distinction of *substantia* and *accidens* and the Aristotelian distinction of causes.<sup>8</sup> But fully as important as either of these is the distinction of *objectum* and *subjectum*, together with the assumptions that lie behind that distinction. Because this antithesis between object and subject is so central in the terminology and methodology of the Lutheran dogmaticians, it deserves careful attention on the basis of the sources. In an effort to interpret the significance of the object-subject antithesis in Lutheran dogmatics, the present essay will seek to analyze the historical origins of that distinction in the dogmaticians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

## II

The ultimate origins of the object-subject antithesis lie in the Greek interpretation of truth, though the terminology itself is a later, medieval invention. In Professor Koehler's words, "these are not Biblical terms, but they are used by dogmaticians."<sup>9</sup> Their origin is, then, to be sought outside the Bible and, more specifically, in the Greek understanding of ἀλήθεια.<sup>10</sup> For the Greeks, "truth" meant that a statement or proposition was an adequate representation of an external reality. Underlying that view is Greek monism, by which God and man were thought of as living in continuity, so that the Idea in the mind and the reality outside the mind stood in relation to each other. Even when the external reality is vague, as in the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, this definition of truth remained.<sup>11</sup>

When Greek thought was amalgamated with Christian thought in medieval theology, this Greek view of truth played a prominent role. As Rudolf Eucken has pointed out in his study of the object-subject antithesis, these terms first appear in Duns Scotus. As part of his metaphysics, Duns found he had to distinguish between truth as it is outside the mind and truth as it is inside the mind. "The word subjective was applied to whatever concerned the subject-matter of the judgment, that is, the concrete objects of thought; on the other hand the term objective referred to that which is contained in the mere *obicere* (*i. e.*, in the presenting of ideas) and hence qualifies the presenting subject."<sup>12</sup> It is evident that Duns' use of the term was the exact opposite of their use today; nevertheless, it was he who introduced the objective-subject antithesis into the discussion of philosophical truth and from there into the framework of Christian theology.

Because both Luther and Melanchthon were opposed to the speculative metaphysics of the medieval doctors, the Scotist version of object and subject does not appear as such in the main body of their theology. Rather, the terms *objectum* and *subjectum* in earliest Lutheran theology would seem to owe their origin to Humanist grammar and Humanist psychology. Melanchthon's *Liber de anima* has a fully developed theory of *objectum* in the modern sense. As each of the five senses has *objecta* peculiar to it,<sup>13</sup> so God and all things are the proper *externum objectum* of the intellect<sup>14</sup> and the Good is the proper *objectum* of the will.<sup>15</sup> And in this sense, Christian faith, too, may be said to have *objecta*, that is, things to which it attaches itself.<sup>16</sup> Taking his cue from Melanchthon, Aegidius Hunnius also spoke of "objectum cognitionis Deus ipse."<sup>17</sup> When the "Credo in unum Deum" of the Nicene Creed is parsed, "Deum" will be seen to be the object and an implied "ego" in "Credo" the subject. By this grammatical distinction, *objectum fidei* eventually became a technical term of Lutheran dogmatics.<sup>18</sup>

The term *subjectum*, on the other hand, does not seem to have been clarified for a long time. During the sixteenth century it is used synonymously with *substantia*<sup>19</sup> and therefore in contexts where we would probably use the term "object."<sup>20</sup> Even though the grammatical implications of the term *subjectum* were set down in opposition to the Calvinistic interpretation of the word,<sup>21</sup> the con-



fused use of the term remained.<sup>22</sup> The clearest statement of *subjectum fidei* in contradistinction to *objectum fidei* is that of Johann Gerhard: "Subjectum fidei . . . est homo."<sup>23</sup> With the exceptions noted, Lutheran theology had developed the distinction between the knowing subject and the known object by the middle of the seventeenth century and was applying it to the articulation of Christian truth.<sup>24</sup> Once the distinction had established itself, it pervaded the entire *corpus doctrinae* of the Lutheran dogmaticians.

### III

There is perhaps no *locus* in which the influence of the object-subject antithesis is more evident than in the description of faith that is to be found in the Lutheran dogmaticians. This can be seen from the familiar distinction between the *fides quae creditur* (objective) and the *fides qua creditur* (subjective). The distinction was most succinctly stated by the medieval scholastic Peter Lombard and was taken over from him by the dogmaticians: "That which we believe is one thing, the faith by which we believe is another; and yet both are called by the name 'faith' — that which we believe and that by which we believe. *Fides quae creditur* is called *fides materialis*, *fides qua creditur* is called *fides formalis*; for *fides quae creditur* is the object of *fides qua creditur*."<sup>25</sup> Within the context of the Lombard's Semi-Pelagian theology, such a distinction had a definite place. For by the knowledge of *fides quae creditur*, a man was doing "as much as is in him"; and God would inevitably confer His grace upon such a man through the *fides qua creditur*. But when the distinction was transplanted into Lutheran theology, which was vigorously opposed to Semi-Pelagianism, how was it to be reinterpreted?

In adopting the Lombard's distinction of *fides quae creditur* and *fides qua creditur*, the Lutheran dogmaticians of the seventeenth century were led to lay undue stress upon the objective element in faith, employing New Testament passages for it that do not apply — a trend which Professor Pieper criticizes in them.<sup>26</sup> In fact, Lutheran dogmatics elaborated the medieval distinction into a trichotomy of *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia*, which Professor Pieper has also subjected to very telling criticism.<sup>27</sup> The trichotomy of *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia* was introduced into Lutheran theology by

Philip Melanchthon.<sup>28</sup> Like the medieval distinction of *fides quae creditur* and *fides qua creditur*, this trichotomy also made room for the operation of the human will in conversion. For its central term, *assensus*, of which we shall have more to say later, was also the term in which Melanchthon expressed his synergism.<sup>29</sup> After Melanchthon, the trichotomy was taken up by Tileman Hesshusius (1527—1588) into the second edition of his dogmatics.<sup>30</sup> Although Chemnitz divided faith into four parts instead of three,<sup>31</sup> the trichotomy eventually became standardized in the Lutheran dogmatists.<sup>32</sup>

The crucial term in that trichotomy of *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia*, is the second, *assensus*. For as the distinction became more and more clear-cut, the term *assensus* and the verb *assentiri* acquired more and more of an intellectual connotation. The insistence that faith is *fiducia* is a central affirmation of the Lutheran Confessions, especially of the Apology.<sup>33</sup> But the term *assentiri* occurs in the Apology, too. Significantly, it is used in contrast to the *fides historica* of Roman Catholicism,<sup>34</sup> to the "notitia historiae seu dogmatum" which the intellectualism of Rome equated with faith.<sup>35</sup> Faith, the Apology insists, is no mere intellectual agreement, in the Greek sense, that a set of propositions corresponds to external reality; "est autem fides proprie dicta, quae assentitur promissioni; de hac fide loquitur scriptura."<sup>36</sup>

This was in keeping with the usage of *assensus* and *assentiri* at that time. In 1540, Caspar Cruciger employs *assentiri* as virtually equivalent to "obey."<sup>37</sup> A generation later, the Latin version of the Formula of Concord speaks of "evangelio vere credere aut assentiri, et id pro veritate agnoscere"; but *assentiri* here serves to render the German "das Jawort dazu geben."<sup>38</sup> And in a later paragraph "credere aut assentiri" is again a rendition of "glauben oder das Jawort dazu geben."<sup>39</sup> Yet another generation later, in the work of Balthasar Meisner quoted earlier, Christian *assentiri* is explained: "ut simul me totum ipsi quasi concredam et omnibus cogitationibus in eum confidam."<sup>40</sup> Thus, far from having an essentially intellectual content, *assentiri* means the entrusting of the total person to God. It was, then, practically synonymous with *fiducia*, and was specifically ascribed to the *voluntas* rather than to the *intellectus*.

At the same time, however, *assensus* could be ascribed to the

*intellectus*. Melanchthon had connected *voluntas* and *assentiri*, as noted above.<sup>41</sup> But it must be remembered that in Melanchthon's reinterpretation of Aristotelian psychology, the *intellectus* and the *voluntas* were almost equated.<sup>42</sup> As a result, he could also ascribe *assensus* to the *intellectus*: "Fides est noticia, qua adsentimur dicto sine dubitatione, victi testimoniis vel autoritate," an intellectual and authoritarian act.<sup>43</sup> Alongside the development sketched in the preceding paragraph (*assensus voluntatis*) was the ascription of *assensus* to the *intellectus*. Of the two uses, the voluntaristic and the intellectualistic, the latter was to win the day. Thus, Hesshusius attaches *assensus* to "totum Dei verbum" and only *fiducia* to the "promissionem gratuitam de remissione peccatorum."<sup>44</sup> For Chemnitz, too, *notitia* and *assensio* belong to the *mens*, while *desiderium* and *fiducia* belong to the *voluntas et cor*.<sup>45</sup> Like Hesshusius, Balthasar Mentzer makes the entire Word of God the object of *assensus*, and only the grace of God the object of *fiducia*.<sup>46</sup> In this he was followed by Gerhard<sup>47</sup> and by David Hollaz,<sup>48</sup> both of whom place the locus of *assensus* in the *intellectus*. Indeed, by the end of the seventeenth century it had even become possible for a Lutheran theologian to maintain that the demons who believe and tremble have *assensus* as well as *notitia* and lack only *fiducia*.<sup>49</sup>

Although the dogmaticians criticized the philosophical distinction between the intellect and the will,<sup>50</sup> as had the Apology before them,<sup>51</sup> they nevertheless made use of it in their definition of *assensus*, turning it from the response of the total person to the agreement of the intellect. In this way, the objective *fides quae creditur* could achieve a position of prominence; for the intellect deals with objective truth, while the will subjectively follows through on the objective truth which the intellect has grasped.

The Biblical use of πιστεύω, especially in James 2:19 and in the pericope John 4:50-53,<sup>52</sup> compelled the dogmatician to devise categories under which this sort of πίστις could be distinguished from saving faith. From the Apology they took the concept of a *fides historica*. In addition, they took the Apology's phrase, *fides specialis*, and made a technical term of it.<sup>53</sup> Over and above these, they spoke of a *fides dogmatica*, a *fides miraculosa*, a *fides generalis*, and several others.<sup>54</sup> The difficulty lay in ascertaining what continuity existed between these uses of πίστις and the πίστις by which men

are justified. That continuity was localized in the *fides quae creditur* — the "objective" content which they all share. The difference between them lay in the *fides qua creditur* — the "subjective" element which is present only in the regenerate.

#### IV

From all this it would appear that the object-subject antithesis, with its corollary distinctions, performed a useful function in the classical Lutheran dogmatics. It sought to give voice to the important theological declaration that there is a "given" in Christian faith over which the believer has no disposition or control. Thus, the body and blood of Christ are present in the Lord's Supper, regardless of the worthiness of either officiant or recipient.<sup>55</sup> I do not call God into existence by my faith in Him, nor dare I write my own Bible. I must listen to the Word, which He has historically set down. This was the dynamic intention behind the object-subject antithesis.

But the word studies presented here would seem to indicate that the form which this dynamic took in the object-subject antithesis and its corollaries left something to be desired as an expression and clarification of Christian doctrine. The distinction of object and subject in faith stems from the speculative metaphysics of Scotist philosophy, and yet it appears in Lutheran theology. The distinction of *fides quae creditur* and *fides qua creditur* stems from the Semi-Pelagianism of medieval theology and was taken over from there into the body of Lutheran dogmatics. The distinction of *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia* stems from the synergism of Melancthon's theology, and yet it was retained by the later Lutheran dogmatists.

This was accomplished in spite of the fact that Lutheran dogmatics vigorously opposed speculative metaphysics, medieval Semi-Pelagianism, and Melancthonian synergism. The only way these three distinctions could be accommodated to the structure of Lutheran theology was by an increased emphasis upon the role of the intellect in faith. In this way, the "objective" came to outweigh the "subjective." And even when Pietism protested against the overemphases of its predecessors, it had to do so in terms of the object-subject antithesis, stressing the latter in preference to the

former. It would seem, then, that neither the "objectivism" of seventeenth-century Lutheranism nor the "subjectivism" of eighteenth-century Lutheranism does complete justice to the Biblical doctrine of faith as this appears in the New Testament, and as it was recovered in the faith of Luther and the theology of the Lutheran Confessions.

St. Louis, Mo.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> On *vox ἀγγραφος*, cf. Martin Chemnitz, *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, ed. by E. Preuss (Leipzig, 1915), p. 80; also his *Loci theologici*, ed. by Polycarp Leyser (3 vols.; Frankfurt, 1653), I, pp. 43—44.

<sup>2</sup> See the discussion of Abraham Calov, "An omnes Fidei Articuli creditu ad salutem necessarii ὄντως in Scripturis traditi esse debeant," *Systema locorum theologicorum* (Wittenberg, 1640—1677), I, pp. 804—807; and Tileman Hesshusius' defense of *τέχνη* in theology, as in other "artes": *De duabus naturis in Christo, earumque unione hypostatica tractatus* (Magdeburg, 1590), leaf H2b—H8a.

<sup>3</sup> Franz Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik* (St. Louis, 1917—1924), I, p. 508.

<sup>4</sup> The derivation of *sacramentum* from civil law is traced by Calov with several representative quotations, *Systema*, IX, pp. 88—89. One of the most scholarly discussions of the term and its validity by a seventeenth-century Lutheran is that of Balthasar Meisner, *Philosophia sobria* (Wittenberg, 1611 to 1627), II, pp. 142—151. For a modern scholar's findings, cf. Hans von Soden, "Μυστήριον und sacramentum in den ersten zwei Jahrhunderten der Kirche," *Zeitschrift fuer die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, XII (1911), pp. 188 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Georg Moebius, *Vindiciae Hutterianae pro compendio theologico* (Leipzig, 1672), p. 467. Tertullian's use of *sacramentum* is carefully examined by Ferdinand Kattenbusch, *Das apostolische Symbol* (Leipzig, 1894—1900), II, pp. 94—97.

<sup>6</sup> See Meisner's discussion of ὑπόστασις, *Philosophia sobria*, II, pp. 279 to 284, and the comments of Moebius, *op. cit.*, pp. 77—78; on ὑπόστασις, see also Chemnitz, *Loci*, II, p. 246.

<sup>7</sup> Aegidius Hunnius, *Articulus de Trinitate per quaestiones et responsiones pertractatus* (Frankfort, 1589), pp. 54—56, felt able to root *essentia* in the etymology of the Old Testament Jehovah; a little later, pp. 87—88, he equates Jehovah with *essentia aut existentia*. See also Hesshusius' discussion, *De duabus naturis*, leaf O4a—O6b, of the relation between *essentia* and the *essentialia Dei idiomatica*.

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of *substantia* and *accidens*, see Abraham Calov, *Scripta philosophica* (Luebeck, 1651), *Metaphysica divina*, II, p. 155; for a discussion of various *causae*, cf. David Hollaz, *Examen theologicum acroamaticum* (Leipzig, 1722), II, pp. 28—39.

<sup>9</sup> E. W. A. Koehler, "Objective Justification," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XVI, (1945), p. 231.

<sup>10</sup> Wilhelm Luther, *Wahrheit und Luege im aeltesten Griechentum* (Leipzig, 1935) is a penetrating analysis of how ἀλήθεια came to take on the meaning that it did in the context of Greek religion and metaphysics.

<sup>11</sup> See the masterful summary of "Meno. The New Knowledge" in Werner Jaeger, *Paideia. The Ideals of Greek Culture*, tr. by Gilbert Highet, II (New York, 1943), pp. 160—173.



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<sup>12</sup> Rudolf Eucken, *Main Currents of Modern Thought*, tr. by Meyrick Booth (New York, 1912), pp. 35—63, is the best historical analysis known to me of the origins of "objective-subjective," though he does not refer to the Lutheran dogmaticians at all.

<sup>13</sup> "Liber de anima," *Corpus Reformatorum* (Halle, 1834 ff.; hereafter abbreviated as CR) 13, 109—119.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, CR 13, 143.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, CR 13, 154—155.

<sup>16</sup> The term appears at least twice in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. IV, par. 53, and Art. IV, par. 55, *Concordia Triglotta*, Saint Louis, 1921), pp. 134—136.

<sup>17</sup> *Articulus de Trinitate*, p. 42; see also Chemnitz, *Loci theologici*, II, p. 245.

<sup>18</sup> Johann Adam Scherzer, *Systema theologiae* (2d ed.; Leipzig and Frankfurt, 1685), p. 429; Hollaz, *Examen*, II, pp. 650—655, are two representative discussions.

<sup>19</sup> So by Hesshusius, *De duabus naturis*, leaf H7a: "subjectum cum accidente dicitur concretum," also leaf O5b; see, too, Chemnitz, *Loci theologici*, II, p. 246: "substantia est subjectum omnium accidentium."

<sup>20</sup> As when Christ's human nature is spoken of as the *subjectum* of the Incarnation by Chemnitz, *De duabus naturis in Christo* (Leipzig, 1590), p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> Balthasar Meisner, *Philosophia sobria*, I, pp. 237—240.

<sup>22</sup> See the confusion in Calov, *Systema*, I, pp. 43—44, where *subjectum* and *objectum* are used interchangeably; and *ibid.*, I, p. 292, where the *subjectum revelationis* is the person to whom a revelation is given — whom we would term the "object" of the revelation.

<sup>23</sup> Johann Gerhard, *Loci theologici*, ed. by E. Preuss (9 vols.; Berlin, 1863 ff.), III, p. 364.

<sup>24</sup> My research has failed to discover when and how the plural "truths" in the sense of "true statements" or "doctrines" first came into use, though such usage is closely connected with the development described above. Both אֱמֻנָה in the Old Testament and ἀλήθεια in the New appear in the singular. And when our dogmaticians speak of *duplex veritas*, they are not referring to "truths," but to their view that philosophical truth and theological truth dare never be in conflict with each other; see my essay, "Natural Theology in David Hollaz," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XVIII (1947), p. 260.

<sup>25</sup> Peter Lombard, 3. sent. dist. 23, lit. C., quoted approvingly by Johann Gerhard, *Loci theologici*, III, p. 350. See also Hollaz, *Examen*, II, p. 647: "Objective faith, or *fides quae creditur*, is loosely (*improprie*) termed faith, for it is the object of faith. . . . But subjective faith, or *qua creditur*, is faith strictly so called (*proprie dicta*), which is in a man as in a subject."

<sup>26</sup> Franz Pieper, *Dogmatik*, II, p. 540: "Aeltere Theologen haben oeffters unnoetigerweise πίστις im objektiven Sinne genommen."

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 512—514.

<sup>28</sup> "Certissimum est fide in hac doctrina non tantum significari noticiam, quam et diaboli tenent, sed significari simul *noticiam* historiae, et *assensionem*, qua promissionem tibi applicas, et *fiduciam* acquiescentem in mediatore et in Deo, iuxta promissionem": "Enarratio epistolae prioris ad Timotheum" (1550 to 1551), CR 15, 1312 (italics my own).

<sup>29</sup> ". . . hic concurrunt tres causae bonae actionis, verbum Dei, Spiritus sanctus et humana voluntas *assentiens* nec repugnans verbo Dei": "Loci theologici" (1543), CR 21, 658.

<sup>30</sup> Tileman Hesshusius, *Examen Theologicum, complectens praecipua capita doctrinae* (2d ed.; Frankfurt, 1578), p. 80.

<sup>31</sup> Martin Chemnitz, *Loci theologici*, II, p. 252; the four parts are: 1. *notitia*; 2. *assensio*; 3. *desiderium*; 4. *fiducia*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. David Hollaz, *Examen*, II, p. 649: "Aliud enim est credere Deum, aliud credere Deo, aliud credere in Deum. Credimus esse Deum per notitiam, credimus Deo per assensum, credimus in Deum per fiduciam"; also *ibid.*, II, p. 659, where he distinguishes an *apprehensio vel receptio meriti Christi triplex*: "cognoscitiva, quae fit per notitiam; approbativa, quae fit per assensum; appropriativa, vel adhaesiva per fiduciam."

<sup>33</sup> Article IV of the Apology makes this insistence repeatedly: par. 44, *Triglotta*, p. 132; par. 46, p. 132 (*cognitio*!); par. 58, p. 136; par. 62, p. 138; par. 69, p. 140 (*confidere*); par. 79, p. 142; par. 80, p. 142; par. 81, p. 142; par. 82, p. 144; par. 99, p. 150; par. 101, p. 150 (*notitia Christi* equals: "nosse beneficia Christi, promissiones credere, quod, quae promisit Deus propter Christum, certo praestet"). But the Formula of Concord is equally insistent on this point: Solida Declaratio, Art. V, par. 22, p. 958; par. 25, p. 960; Art. VII, par. 62, p. 994: "credere praedicato Verbo Dei, in quo nobis Christus, verus Deus et homo, cum omnibus beneficiis . . . offertur. . . . Haec qui ex Verbo Dei commemorari audit, fide accipit sibi quae applicat et hac consolatione totus nititur . . . qui, inquam, vera fiducia in verbo evangelii firmiter in omnibus tribulationibus et tentationibus acquiescit. . . ."

<sup>34</sup> Art. IV, par. 48, *Triglotta*, p. 134: "non est tantum notitia historiae, sed est *assentiri* promissioni Dei . . . est velle et accipere oblatam promissionem"; not an "otiosa notitia," par. 61, p. 136; par. 115, p. 154; not an "otiosa cogitatio," par. 64, p. 138.

<sup>35</sup> Art. III, par. 262, *Triglotta*, p. 224.

<sup>36</sup> Art. IV, par. 113, *Triglotta*, p. 154.

<sup>37</sup> Caspar Cruciger, *In epistolam Pauli ad Timotheum priorem Commentarius* (Strassburg, 1540), p. 66: "Deus in his naturis quae sic condidit ut haberent liberum assensum, non semper agit voluntate efficaci, nec affert necessitatem assentiendi *voluntati* nostrae, quae sic condita est ut possit non assentiri. Ut autem assentiat *voluntas*, et obediat divinae voluntati, necesse est accedere efficacem motionem Dei."

<sup>38</sup> Solida Declaratio, Art. II, par. 13, *Triglotta*, p. 884; cf. also Tileman Hesshusius' phrase: "Agnoscimus nos illi (Spiritui) hanc reverentiam et obedientiam debere: ut credamus vera esse quae ipse tam perspicue docuit," *De duabus naturis*, leaf P4b.

<sup>39</sup> Solida Declaratio, Art. II, par. 18, *Triglotta*, p. 888.

<sup>40</sup> Balthasar Meisner, *Philosophia sobria*, II, p. 257.

<sup>41</sup> See the quotation in note 29 above.

<sup>42</sup> On this equation, see R. R. Caemmerer, "The Melancthonian Blight," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XVIII (1947), pp. 321-338.

<sup>43</sup> Melancthon, "Liber de anima," *CR* 13, 166. Despite his tremendous acquaintance with Melancthon's words and works, Hans Engelland seems to me to overlook this ambivalence in Melancthon's use of *assensus*: *Melancthon, Glauben und Handeln* (Munich, 1931), p. 585, note 36.

<sup>44</sup> *Examen theologicum*, p. 80; and yet, *ibid.*, p. 112, he can say: "Paulus . . . jubet ut promissioni firmiter assentiamur," and *ibid.*, p. 70, quoting Melancthon, though not by name (see note 29 above), he can ascribe *assensus* to the *voluntas*.

<sup>45</sup> Chemnitz, *Loci theologici*, II, p. 252.

<sup>46</sup> Balthasar Mentzer, *Disputationes theologicae et scholasticae XIV* (Marburg, 1600), Disp. V: "De justificatione hominis peccatoris coram Deo," par. 91—92.

<sup>47</sup> Gerhard, *Loci theologici*, III, p. 354, based on Thomas Aquinas, on *assensus* and *intellectus*, *ibid.*, p. 350.

<sup>48</sup> Hollaz, *Examen*, II, p. 649.

<sup>49</sup> Johann Adam Scherzer, *Systema theologiae*, pp. 300—301.

<sup>50</sup> Hollaz, *Examen*, II, p. 658; see the strong statement of Gerhard, *Loci*, p. 364, responding to the argument that faith cannot be *fiducia* because it is in the intellect: "Argumentum petitur est non e schola Spiritus sancti, sed ex principiis philosophicis. . . . Scriptura intellectum et voluntatem non distinguit. . . ."

<sup>51</sup> Art. III, par. 183, *Triglotta*, p. 204.

<sup>52</sup> On the faith of demons in James 2:19, cf. Melancthon, "Loci theologici" (1543), CR 21, 785; Hesshusius, *Examen theologicum*, p. 81.

<sup>53</sup> The phrase occurs in the Apology, Art. IV, par. 45, *Triglotta*, p. 132. It seems, however, that Melancthon did not employ it as a technical term; for though he makes use of it again in the *Loci* of 1535, CR 21, 491, his next reference to it, in the *Loci* of 1543, CR 21, 889, adds an explanatory note: "Hac fide speciali, ut sic dicam. . . ."

<sup>54</sup> The various species of *fides* are distinguished by Hollaz, *Examen*, II, 647; see also Gerhard's approving reference to Bonaventura's distinction of ten types of faith, *Loci theologici*, III, p. 350.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, Formula of Concord, Solida Declaratio, Art. VII, par. 123, *Triglotta*, pp. 1012—1014.



# God's Grace the Preacher's Tool

## A Homiletical Study of Titus 2:11-14

By RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Most pastors read the Christmas Epistle during the holidays. Many preached on it as a text for a Christmas message. As they prepared that sermon, they probably realized that this text speaks only secondarily to congregations. Primarily it is addressed to a pastor, a pastor who is training other pastors. It does not speak specifically of Christmas, but of the redemption of Jesus Christ in general; not specifically of the moods and joys of Christmas, but of the objective of good works in Christian people. Hence the text speaks to pastors about their own ministry to people, especially the ministry of leading their people to good works. This study proposes to guide the meditation of the Christian pastor as he ponders this text to that end.

### I

The Epistle belongs to the portrayal of the Christian Gospel, which is so dear to the heart of St. Paul, which we usually epitomize in Rom. 1:16 or 2 Cor. 5:15-21. Here St. Paul speaks of that Gospel in four stages. The first is the primary plan of God, which He brought to light in Christ Jesus (1:1-3). The second is the Gospel as St. Paul himself received it as a mandate from God and preached it to his world (1:3). The third is the Gospel as Titus accepts it and preaches it; more specifically, as he prepares and guides his co-workers to preach it (1:5-9; 2:7-8; 3:3-7). In this process, Titus is responsible not only for the setting forth of the Gospel message itself, but for keeping it pure of dilution and error (1:10-16; 3:9-11). The fourth is the Gospel as it is embraced by the people and through them witnessed to others. This witness is a compound thing: love and good works, testifying to the working of the Savior, who is proclaimed in words (cf. Phil. 2:14-16). The Cretans had particular problems of materialism to contend with (1:12-13); hence the Letter is less specific about the Christian speaking the

Gospel, and more specific about the testimony of Christian love and good works (1:13-14; 2:8, 10; 3:1-3, 9, 14). The important thing about good works is that they are an outgrowth of God's grace in Christ Jesus (text, and 3:4-8); conversely, removing the doctrine of Christ from the motive for preaching and from the motivation for good works in preaching is disastrous (1:10-11; 3:9-11).

Difficulties confront the Christian preacher as he preaches good works. His theology tells him that if his people are saved, they ought to be doing good works without further help in words. Yet many of his professing Christians are weak in good works, and he should stimulate them. How can he teach good works to the veterans of the faith (2:1-5) who are themselves teachers of others and perhaps of the preacher? How shall he speak to young men or to servants when he himself is free of the temptations of youth or world and lives in the sheltered calm of the holy ministry (2:6-10)? Are these not problems which may create a sense of unfitness or inferiority in the preacher? which may cause him to feel that whenever he speaks about good works, he is only "preaching" and not enabling or empowering? To this preacher, St. Paul says, "Let no man despise thee" (2:15). No man has occasion to despise the Christian preacher's message if—he employs "these things," the motive power for the Christian's good works, the grace of God in Christ.

## II

The Apostle has been suggesting to Titus how he and his helpers are to encourage the people of Crete to do good works. Now he concentrates on the reason for their doing so; on the gist of the message that is to empower them to accomplish it. The core of the program does not lie in Titus or in his elders. They are to do the speaking and encouraging; but they are not to be the source of the message's power. That power lies in a fact which has already happened; in a power from God, the grace of God, which has already appeared.

Look at this grace of God that is at the bottom of the life of good works. It is a grace, a gift of God, "that bringeth salvation." It involves a rescue, a release, a salvage. All men are involved in that rescue; it has happened for all people. God is unseen; His

ways often seem ungracious and forbidding. But He has revealed His grace, has revealed it as one that saves and salvages all men.

Salvation — that is a familiar word. It reminds the Christian of rescue from sin and rescue for heaven after death. In the context of this Epistle, however, the concept is specific. Men without faith have a mind and conscience that is defiled, and in works they deny God, "being abominable and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate" (1:15-16, unfit, manifestly without the ability to accomplish). People without God are aware of the need for good works, but they imagine that they can achieve them through their own power and through legalistic regimentation (1:10-13). The echo of these concepts in the text is "ungodliness and worldly lusts." God's design for man's deeds is that he should do them mindful of God — not only of God's pattern and prescription, but of His power and inner supply for the ability to do them. Man's appalling plight is that he is caught in ungodliness, in which he does things which are contrary to the prescription of God's will, but worse — he does things which may on the surface be good and useful, but which stem from a heart without God. However, only in exceptional instances will he do things good on the surface; for he is prey to "worldly lusts." The secret of behavior is not the surface action; that is only a symptom of the underlying drives and demands of the heart. Those drives are "worldly," stemming for and from fleshly existence rather than God.

St. Paul reminds Titus, and preachers today, too, that their problem is more acute than appears in theory. Christians have come under the saving grace of God; they have come to faith. Yet they continue to live surrounded by the world; the old habits of the flesh lurk on within them and their companions. This ongoing malady of the flesh, living side by side with the Spirit in the Christian, demands help. That help comes not with prescriptions purporting to be God's (1:10-11; 3:9). It must come from God's own gift of grace. The stricken man is not to be harangued to rescue himself; God's rescue must be brought to him from outside of him. God's grace is the preacher's tool for stimulating his hearer to good works; and nothing else is the tool. "These things speak" (v. 15); "these things are good and profitable unto men" (3:8); these things — the facts of the grace of God, which has already appeared.

The four verses of the text are one sentence; and St. Paul has deployed his materials so that the great appearing of God's grace is stated very clearly in immediate connection with God's plan for the good works of Christians. He makes that connection twice, in v. 12 and in v. 14. Hence the full meaning of "the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men" is expressed below: "The great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us, etc." Here our minds are focused on the "appearing." God's grace literally became visible, though God is invisible (cf. John 1:1-14; Heb. 1:1-4). The saving grace of God has appeared; it appeared in Jesus Christ.

Yet the act of rescue, the saving quality of this grace, is specified even more accurately, in this text. At Christmas every Christian preacher reacts against the sentimentality that asks people simply to ponder the sweet Babe in the manger. This text says: "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us." The rescue took a price. The Savior of saving grace saved by giving Himself for us. The giving had its great purpose: that "He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify a peculiar people unto Himself." Those words are borrowed from the language of sacrifice, a sacrifice of life itself into death. Jesus *died* for sin; He was obedient unto *death* (Phil. 2:8). It is the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses us from sin (1 John 1:7). God's grace appears in Christ; in His incarnation at Bethlehem indeed; but continuing in His human career, it climaxes in the act on the Cross, the altar of His sacrifice; His death is signed and sealed by God as our redemption through His raising Jesus from the dead (cf. Acts 4:10; 5:30; 13:30, 33; Rom. 4:24-25, and many others).

If therefore the preacher is to lead his people to good works, it is this story that must be told, the story of God's grace revealing and demonstrating itself in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. The story speaks of a task that is done, of men reconciled to God once and for all time; but as it speaks, that redemption comes home to the man, takes hold of the man, arrives at its destination in the man (2 Cor. 5:18-21). "These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works" (3:8). How can this be? What sort of magic resides in the reciting of the work of Jesus Christ that men

should thereby be led to change their character and to become productive in good works? Why is that story so crucial in the process that preachers should be reminded not to beat about with words of law and prescription, but rather tell the story? (3:9: "strivings about the law . . . they are unprofitable and vain.")

### III

The text itself answers this question, twice over, by emphasizing the fact: the great design in the mind of God, the great purpose behind the appearing of the grace of God, the objective before Christ the Savior in His redeeming work, is that people should do good works! It says that the grace of God teaches us. In the Authorized Version we may get the impression that this "teaching" is like an instructor pointing to a list of things to do: "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, etc."; the grace of God saves, and the grace of God instructs; it rescues from damnation, and it holds before us the prescriptions of God. That interpretation of these words may lead the preacher to speak of the Gospel as saving his people from sin and of the Law as stimulating his people to good works—an ancient fallacy. Actually the word for "teaching" in the text is intransitive; the subsequent words are not an object clause, but a purpose clause. The word itself is better rendered "stimulating" or "training." Luther uses the intransitive "zuechtiget," and the Nestle text puts a comma after it. This is it: "The grace of God, saving all men, has appeared, teaching us; its purpose is that, denying, etc." That purpose clause allows us to peer deep into the mind of God and sense what He plans to accomplish through the redemption. His plan is not simply to produce a paper transaction on a heavenly ledger, but to achieve reactions and changes in human lives here and now. He is a Fruitgrower and His *purpose* is to raise crops (John 15); He is a Salvager of bad instruments and His purpose is that these instruments do the job for which He originally designed them (Eph. 2:10). The purpose clause in v. 14 allows us to peer deep into the heart of Christ and see that when He died for us on the Cross, it was His purpose to redeem us and to fit us out for good works. Hence the preacher preaches the Word with that purpose (cf. 2 Tim. 3:17); Christians go to their Baptism with that pur-

pose (Titus 3:7-8; Rom. 6:4, Stoeckhardt: "Dass wir in Neuheit des Lebens oder in einem neuen Leben wandeln, das war der *finis ultimus*"). The particle *iva* is used to emphasize not so much result or by-product, but purpose and design of the Lord's action. Actually that design of the Lord stems, in the text, from the word "hath appeared," and we might translate: "The grace of God, saving all men and teaching us, has appeared, with the design that, etc."

The design of the redemption is expressed even more fully in v. 14. The end aim in that great program of the Incarnation and Crucifixion was that "He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The presentation of St. Paul to the Romans has trained us to think of the process in two stages: The redemption leads to the forgiveness of sins, accepted by faith; thereupon the Holy Spirit creates in us the power for good works. The result is the popular phrase: our faith produces fruits of good works. More accurately, however — and Romans 6 itself substantiates this view — we may think of the redemption in this way: God and man through it are reconciled, and because of the redemption God simultaneously works faith to hold to Him as God and Father and works love to serve Him and our fellow man in works. The accent in this text is on the work of God; God works the works! It is precisely the accent of Luther's explanation of the Second Article: "I believe that Jesus Christ . . . is my Lord; who has redeemed me . . . that (*auf dass*, purpose) I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him. . . ." In Titus 3 St. Paul restates this emphasis, this time with the addition of reference to the work of the Holy Ghost and of Baptism; again he asserts that the good works are the direct outgrowth of the redemption.

When Christ redeemed us from sin, therefore, it was a redemption in the fullest sense of the term not merely an abstract transaction without reference to the heart and life of the person, but a release from the bondage and hold of sin upon the person (again cf. Romans 5 and 6). The power to keep the law, νόμος, and overcome lawlessness (here translated "iniquity") is therefore not some energy in the sinner's own power, but it comes from Christ's *freeing* us from lawlessness; that power is communicated to Christians as they hear and think of His redeeming work. When Christ gave



Himself for us, He thereby "purified unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." By human birth and environment, men are of flesh and world, impure and tainted; but Christ's redemption purifies not merely from the guilt of that taint, but from the taint itself. It makes out of erstwhile worldlings a peculiar, owned group, attached to Christ (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9; Ex. 19:5; Ps. 135:4). He has paid a price for them, and they are His. Hence when the preacher speaks of Christ's work to His people, he is leading them not simply to more acceptance of the forgiveness of sins, but he is playing a part in the program by which the purpose of Christ's redemption comes to fruition. He is lighting a fire, refueling a fire, for good works.

#### IV

The preacher who holds the redemption of Christ before his people therefore gives them the power to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. God is back in their minds; He is again the Main-spring in the drives of their hearts. They can do battle with the lusts of the flesh and world. They have no simple guarantee that they shall be without those lusts, 1 John 1; but they do have the guarantee that they can battle them (cf. Rom. 7:18-25).

The preacher who holds the redemption of Christ before His people leads them into a life, already this side of the grave, that is sober, righteous, and godly. Instead of being befuddled with the lusts and ambitions of flesh and world, they will have more and more of their hearts rooted in their relation to God through Christ Jesus, they will be more and more aware of God in Christ as the power for their thinking and desire; they will succeed more and more in bending every capacity of thought to this great consciousness of God as Lord and Savior (1 Thess. 5:6, 8; 1 Pet. 4:7).

One significant corollary of this soberness and godliness — Saint Paul makes it the summary of the Christian life — is the "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Christians will be unhappy about the good works that they do, for they will not be perfect. They will try hard to serve their Lord and still come short. Hence they will yearn for the day when the battle against the flesh is over and they will be in perfection. They will audit their works with care and find them imperfect; and they will draw on the power of their liv-

ing Lord for improvement, yet at the same time long that the age may begin when there will be no more sin and they will be wholly with the Lord.

Hence the Christian preacher will seek to buoy up the flagging spirits of his people with the promise of "the redemption of the body"; but simultaneously he will impart the power to be better Christians, finer members of Christ's people, better fighters against world and flesh, right now. That he will do because he is a workman employing the tool which God Himself has entrusted to him, by which he may energize Christ's people to good works. That tool is the Gospel of the Savior's redemption, held before his people as the source of power for their conquest of sin and zeal for good works.



## *A Series of Sermon Studies for the Church Year*

### REMINISCERE

JOHN 8:21-30

*The Text and the Day.* The teaching of Christ in the setting of this text and context is the fearless and emphatic reiteration of His astounding claims concerning Himself; viz., *He is the Christ, the Divine Savior of the world.*

The prevailing thought of the Gospel Lesson for Reminiscere is the absolute necessity of believing in the vicarious atonement of Christ, who is the "Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." The Introit (Ps. 25:6): "Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old." The Gospel Lesson re-echoes the cry of the Syrophoenician woman: "Lord, help me." The Epistle emphasizes the need for holiness. In this text the Jews, in altercation with Jesus, deny that He is Christ the Savior. Jesus warns them on account of their unbelief. He shows them that they are without excuse and that eternal disaster will be their well-deserved doom.

*Notes and Meaning.* — "I go My way"; i. e., "I go away," "I am going away of My own accord." Woe to all who reject Christ. It is a terrible thing when He says, "I go away." He has gone away from Jews, Romanists, Modernists, Liberalists, materialists, social gospelites, etc. "I was the Savior among you and gave you the Father's Word." But if you do not want to be saved — very well — do as you please. You remain what you are, and I remain what I am.

"And ye shall seek Me" — the time will come when I am gone and you will be searching Messiahs, and they will be false and will bring neither temporal nor spiritual salvation. When the Gospel is gone, then the search begins. Alas, how men struggle in their work-righteousness today and find no peace and salvation!

"Ye shall die in your sin." Their chief sin was unbelief, which

underlay all their other sins. Unless they repented and ceased rejecting the Savior, eternal condemnation would be their lot.

"Whither I go, ye cannot come." — This is the climax — eternal separation from Christ the Savior. Here is the futility of "good" works: "ye cannot come."

V. 23: "From beneath," of things which are below; they were earthly, sensual, devilish. Christ's spirit was directly contrary: "from above," pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy, genuine.

V. 25: "Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning," "I am altogether even what I am telling you." He is nothing but what He represents, and from the beginning has represented, Himself to be.

V. 26. Christ constantly appealed to the Father as the Source of His Word and as His Witness — unlike those who speak their own notions and judgments, He speaks in the world what He has heard from Him who sent Him.

V. 28. Even the future will bear Him out, as the Jews will see in due time.

V. 29. You can see for yourselves that the Father is with Me, and prompts whatever I say, by comparing all My doings with His will.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Laying more emphasis on the doubts of the Jews than on Christ's witness that He is the Messiah. While we must point out the sin and folly of those who deny Christ's deity, nevertheless our emphasis must be that Christ is true God and true Man and the divinely appointed Redeemer of the world. Dealing in generalities, condemning the Jews and the Romans and the Russians and the modern Church and Congress and church officials will result in much assent and little or no penitence. Do we see the sin of the Jews in ourselves? Christ called sinners to repentance. He preached to them the Law in its full severity. He proclaimed to them the Gospel in its full sweetness.

*Preaching Emphasis.* — The absolute necessity of believing in Christ, who was crucified for the sins of the world. Preach Christ the Light of the world without whom everything is darkness, subject to Satan and death. The Lord preached that "He is the Savior of the World" right in the Temple at Jerusalem, where the Pharisees ruled and where they wanted to kill Him and dared not. Christ

abolished everything in which the Pharisees gloried — the Temple, the Law, and their form of worship. He preached, "I am He." Let the servants of God with courage and boldness preach the fate of the unbelievers, who shall die in their sin and be forever separated from Christ; and with the same courage let them preach the certainty of our salvation, which rests upon the Father, who sent Christ, and rests upon Christ, Who died for our sins.

*Problem and Goal.* — To see the spiritual dullness, ignorance, and unbelief not only in the Jews, but also in ourselves. With repentant and believing heart to accept Jesus Christ as "my very own and personal Savior and Redeemer." The Word of Christ is indispensable for every human being — for unbelievers, that they may come to faith; for believers, that they may continue in the faith.

*Outline:*

CHRIST'S TESTIMONY CONCERNING HIMSELF

- I. The Contents of His Testimony.
  - A. Who Christ is. Vv. 25, 28, 23, 24.
  - B. What He has done for us. Vv. 28-29.
  - C. How indispensable for all. Vv. 24, 26.
- II. The Truth of His Testimony.
  - A. Christ is precisely what He claims to be. V. 25.
  - B. His Word is the Father's, as future will reveal. V. 28.
  - C. His Word pleases the Father. V. 29.
- III. The Effect of His Testimony.
  - A. How all may escape dying in sin. Vv. 24, 21.
  - B. How sarcastically the unbeliever sneers, "Who art Thou?" i.e., "Oh, is that so!" Vv. 25, 27.
  - C. How joyfully the believer accepts, "Who art Thou?" i.e., "Oh, how wonderful!" V. 30.

EDWIN E. PIEPLOW

OCULI

JOHN 2:13-15

*The Text and the Day.* — In earlier days this was the Sunday on which the catechumens became *initiati*, or initiates, (1) by an examination in the things learned thus far; (2) by a public renuncia-

tion of Satan (cp. the baptismal vow and its renewal in confirmation); and (3) by a formal exorcism, commanding Satan to depart from them. The *Propers* are very appropriate: "He shall pluck my feet out of the net" (Introit); "Defense against all enemies" (Collect); "Ye were . . . in darkness" (Epistle); "Let not man prevail" (Gradual); and Christ, after casting out a devil, warns against the dreadful consequences of his return (Gospel). How fitting our text, teaching the purging of the Lord's Temple (also the temple of the believing heart) from all that interferes with a consistent profession of faith.

*Notes on the Meaning.* — V. 14: "Those who sold oxen" — for the sacrifices of the worshipers who had come from afar; "changers of money" were those who for profit exchanged heathen coins which often had idolatrous inscriptions, for the Jewish shekel, which was required of every male as his Temple tax and which was the equivalent of a workman's wages for two days of labor.

V. 17: "The zeal . . ." quoted from Psalm 69, a Messianic Psalm, pointing to the holy indignation of God against the misuse of His holy Temple.

V. 20: "Forty and six years . . ." it took about eighty-five years to build the Temple. It was still under construction at this time and was not completed until about 64 A. D.

V. 23. "In the feast [*en heortee*] . . ." the feast covered a period of seven days, and during this period Jesus 'was doing' (*epoiei*, Imperfect) miracles. "Many believed" (*episteusan*, Ingressive, Aorist, came to believe in Him), but their faith was not going to last; and for that reason, Jesus, knowing all hearts, did not commit Himself to them (*epistenen*, Imperfect, lit., did not place confidence in them).

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — A warning against the use of money-making devices on church property and by church organizations ought not to be made the main point of the sermon. Our text is a lesson rather against the inconsistency of professing a faith in ceremony and form, without putting it to practice in life. The Scribes and the Pharisees, for instance, were in the midst of a *ceremonial* cleansing of God's Temple through burnt offerings and the custom of purging out the old leaven, but failed to accompany this with the *actual*

purging of the Temple from a practice which interfered with the proper worship of God. Such is also the case when we profess *formal* loyalty to God in rituals and ceremonies, but *in practice* allow extraneous matters to interfere with the *actual* hearing and keeping of His Word (the Gospel).

*Problem and Goal.*—In order to meet the hearer's need according to this text, the preacher will (1) Seek to make his people realize that it is a dangerous sin, of which they too are guilty, to allow anything to interfere with the consistent worship and service of God (Gospel and Epistle); (2) On the basis of Christ's perfect fulfillment of all the Passover symbolism and sacrifices, guaranteed by the sure sign of His Resurrection, the preacher will assure his people the complete cleansing of their hearts from all sin; and (3) he will appeal to them on the ground of this perfect purging from sin always to suit their actions to the word, to "walk as children of light" (Epistle), and thus daily to purge the Temple of their hearts from all that might interfere with the worship and service of the Savior.

*Illustrations.*—1. In the Gospel the Lord shows us that carelessness may result in a return of Satan with a sevenfold possession. 2. The Epistle lists the kinds of sin which may prevent a consistent profession of faith in word and deed. 3. In Rev. 3:20 we behold our Savior seeking entrance into the heart's temple, in order to remove the dangerous sin of lukewarmness. 4. Dives, like the Jews and others, thought that miracles might be more effective than the Word, but miracles are not the sure ground for faith (Luke 16:30-31; and John 2:23-25). 5. A good example of a layman cleansing his heart from that which caused sermons to seem dull to him is found in the *Walther League Messenger*, July, 1949, pp. 10—11, under the title "There Are No Dull Sermons."

*Outline:*

JESUS COMES INTO HIS TEMPLE TO CLEANSE IT

I. The Cleansing.

- A. As the inconsistent practices in the Temple of Jerusalem required a purging, even so the inconsistencies of our profession of faith require a daily and repeated purging of the temple of our hearts.

- B. Even as Jesus with a righteous zeal cleansed His earthly sanctuary, so with an equal zeal and with the full right of ownership He would cleanse our hearts.

## II. Our Reaction.

- A. As some demanded a sign proving His right to cleanse the Temple, so some today demand miracles for faith in His power to cleanse.
- B. As some did believe because of His miracles, even so some today will accept Christ for a time, but fail in the hour of trial.
- C. As the disciples remembered Christ's prophecy and believed the testimony concerning Him, purging their hearts according to His Word (John 17:17-19; Acts 4:33; Acts 5:41-42), even so let us believe in deed and in truth, purging our hearts from sin.

THEODORE F. NICKEL

## LAETARE

LUKE 12:31-34

*The Text and the Day.*—This text cries for a hearing on this or any other day of the church year.

*Notes on Meaning.*—Jesus was preaching to a vast audience (Luke 12:1-12). Taking advantage of a pause in the sermon, "a boor with nothing but money on his brain brayed in, 'Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me'" (v. 13). (William Lyon Phelps tells us that after Lincoln had finished his memorable words in the Second Inaugural, one man pushed through the crowd and began pleading with him for a post-office appointment.) After rebuking the fellow, our Lord warned His hearers against covetousness, "for a man's life [his *real* life] consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (vv. 14-15). Grubby thing—worship as practiced by the Rich Fool, ends in eternal poverty. Only he is rich who has God (vv. 16-21).

Turning to those who have God, Jesus makes the application. We are not to be anxiously concerned about things. That is unnecessary. Our Father, who has given us the greater, our life, will certainly also give us the lesser, the things which we need for our life. Again, it is useless. All our worrying about things brings us



nothing. And it is heathenish. "Take no thought for your life. . . . For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (vv. 22-30).

And now follows our text: "But rather seek ye the Kingdom of God." The children of God have a philosophy of life that is different: one that is concerned not with things, but with the Kingdom of God. They *have* the Kingdom. "It did please your Father to give you the Kingdom." Yet, surrounded by things and by people who seek after things, they must "keep on seeking the Kingdom," must keep on hungering and striving for the Kingdom, must keep on making oneness with God their all-consuming concern. To this end, Jesus tells them to "sell your belongings, and give alms." Sacrificing their things (if need be, all things) for the Kingdom will help them keep their hearts off things and on the Kingdom. Moreover, they thereby invest in the Kingdom—they exchange that which they can't take with them for that which they *can* take with them. John 15:16: "That your fruit should remain." Rev. 14:13: "Their works do follow them."

*Problem and Goal.*—Page through the "ads" in our magazines. Consider the lure of things. "Statisticians have estimated that a century ago the average man had 72 wants, of which 16 were regarded as necessities, but that today the average man has 484 wants, 94 of which are regarded as necessities, and that, moreover, whereas a century ago 200 articles were urged upon the average man by salesmanship, now 32,000 are urged on us" (Harry Emerson Fosdick, in *The Hope of the World*). In the midst of all this, Jesus wants us to show a true sense of values by giving the first place in our life to the Kingdom and by placing our all into the service of the Kingdom.

*Outline:* THE CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

1. The most important thing about a person is his philosophy of life. Your idea of the purpose of life will greatly determine what you are going to do with your life, and it will have a definite bearing on your eternal destiny.

2. The life philosophy of the vast majority of people centers in things. Their aim is the accumulation and enjoyment of things. But

no number of things can fill their heart. And when their things leave them, or when they must leave their things, they have everlastingly nothing.

3. The great void in men's hearts is a God-shaped blank. The Christian philosophy of life centers in Him who alone can fill that blank — God. We Christians have God. He is our reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. We have the Kingdom. Righteousness, peace, joy, heaven, are God's free gift, which we receive by faith. That is our treasure, priceless and unfailing. Why bother about things?

4. But we *do* bother about things. Surrounded by things and the worshipers of things, we often find the pull of things tremendous. Time and again we catch ourselves indulging in the love of things — and forgetting about the Kingdom. Therefore the admonition of Jesus to "keep on seeking the Kingdom of God." To have the Kingdom within us and someday to live with our Savior-King in glory, this must be the prime purpose of our existence.

5. And what about things? Our Father knows what things we need, and He will add them unto us. As for the other things, they are given us that we may bring sacrifices for the Kingdom. By doing this, we avoid the danger of setting our hearts upon them and, at the same time, exchange them for that which we can take with us.

OSWALD RIESS

## JUDICA

MATT. 20:20-28

*The Text and the Day.* — Judica Sunday is the Sunday prior to Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Holy Week emphasizes not only Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, but also Christ's supreme sacrifice on the Cross for the salvation of all mankind. The regular Epistle for this Sunday (Heb. 9:11-15) points to Christ, the great High Priest, and the service He rendered by shedding His blood so that mankind might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. In our text, especially in the last part, our Savior points the way to true greatness through humble service.

*Notes on Meaning.* — In treating this text it is well for us to remember that the "Then" of v. 20 points back to the context (vv. 17-19), the detailed description of the Passion of Jesus. It seems as though Salome and her sons completely ignored this statement of Christ concerning His Passion. Her whole request shows a

wrong conception of Christ's mission and Christ's kingdom. The prayer of Salome is unusual. Usually the disciples expected too little. They were men of little faith, but here a mother and her sons expect too much. Salome had a vision of Christ as a temporal king with a splendid court, and she requested that her sons, John and James, sit at the right and left of the kingly throne, in seats of honor as prime ministers of the state. It is well to remember that in the case of the division on Judgment Day (cf. Matthew 25) *the right* signifies honor and *the left* shame; but in a royal court both sides are places of honor, the left only slightly less honorable than the right (cf. 1 Kings 2:19; 22:19; 2 Chron. 18:18). The "cup" in vv. 23-24 is the cup of suffering (cf. John 18:11; Matt. 26:39, 42). To drink the cup means to endure suffering. In v. 23 Jesus identifies the suffering of His disciples, suffering for His sake, with His own suffering (1 Pet. 4:13, 2 Cor. 4:10, Gal. 6:17). "Not Mine to give." Disposition of the glory seats in heaven rests in the eternal counsel of God the Father. After showing in v. 25 how the great of the world exercise greatness, Jesus shows that true greatness involves becoming a servant, a lowly slave. True greatness is selfless service based on the example of Christ, who laid down His life to earn our salvation (Col. 1:13-14).

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — In preaching it is easy to make too much of the surmise that Salome tried to bind Jesus in advance by promising to grant a favor before He knew what the favor would be (v. 20), to speak of oath-bound lodge promises, etc. One can also stress the folly of Salome's prayer too much. She had the wrong conception of Christ's kingdom, and that makes her prayer foolish. It is not wrong for a mother to ask that her child be of real service in the Kingdom of God.

*Problem and Goal.* — Worldly people usually have the wrong idea of greatness. They consider power, authority, honor, lordship, the mark of true greatness. Christian people, living in this power-mad world, are often influenced by worldly standards of greatness and worldly ways to attain this greatness. The aim of Jesus and the aim of our sermon should be to show the right way to greatness, the Jesus way to importance.

*Illustration.* — A very poor St. Louis family found itself in financial difficulties. The father was in poor health, he did not have a

steady job, the children were sick, and the parents were wondering how they could raise a little money. Their little six-year-old son heard them discussing the problem, and he unselfishly offered to sell the best thing he had, his secondhand bicycle. He was ready to render this service to his parents and family. The result of this kind offer to serve in his childish way by making a sacrifice brought the picture of the little boy into the newspaper. As a result, he did not only keep his old bicycle, but received a brand-new one, together with \$345.00 in gifts, from kind and sympathetic people. A little willing service which was great service indeed!

*Outline:*

THE WAY TO TRUE GREATNESS

- I. Not the way of demanding prayer.
  - A. Salome's request was based on wrong notions concerning Christ's kingdom, v. 21.
  - B. Salome sought greatness for her sons through granted favors, vv. 20, 23.
- II. But the way of humble service.
  - A. Christ's idea of true greatness, vv. 26-27.
  - B. Christ's example of humble service, v. 28.
  - C. Our path to true greatness through grateful service to God and man.

E. L. ROSCHKE

## BRIEF STUDIES

### THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW IN CHRISTIAN PREACHING

Article V of the Formula of Concord admonishes us to guard with diligent care "the distinction between Law and Gospel as a special brilliant light." Law and Gospel are mingled when the Gospel is viewed as a continuation of the Law, whereby the Gospel is made a "new law." This is the danger to which those theologians are exposed who place a false emphasis on subjectivism in theology and endeavor to gauge the state of grace by the degree of their sanctification. This invariably leads to activism, a servile subservience to the Law, which is mistaken for Christian activity. Or Law and Gospel are mingled when the Christian liberty from the Law (1 Tim. 1:9) is presented as though the Christian were already completely regenerated and required no preaching of the Law at all. This occurs when Christians, on the basis of a false application of *sola gratia*, ignore the earnest admonitions to crucify the old man. It is true that man can neither add to nor detract from the promises of God's grace, for they are and remain an objective reality regardless of man's attitude. But objectivity of the Gospel dare never be made the basis for a kind of quietism which sees in the Gospel primarily a soft pillow on which the lazy Christian can slumber securely. Antinomianism is in reality a false anticipation of the future glory and will inevitably lead to antigospelism. It is therefore essential for the theologian to maintain at all times the proper distinction between Law and Gospel, and this implies that he has a clear understanding of the two doctrines both in their antithesis and in their conjunction.

#### I

Wherever Reformed theology with its emphasis on subjectivism and Lutheran theology with its emphasis on objectivism meet, the doctrine concerning the proper distinction of Law and Gospel immediately becomes a major issue. This has become evident on both sides of the Atlantic in recent years, especially in Europe, where the contacts between Reformed and Lutheran theologians are more frequent and closer than in America, at least until quite recently. This accounts in part for the current interest among European theologians in a re-study of the proper distinction between Law and Gospel. Walther's *Gesetz und Evangelium* hardly caused a ripple outside of the Lutheran Church in America, and even the English translation by Dr. Dau in 1929 received

scant notice. In Europe, however, where several thousand copies of Walther's book were distributed since the war, it has been hailed as a very relevant book. Among the several studies on this important doctrine the most recent is presented by Lic. Ernst Kinder,<sup>1</sup> instructor of Systematic Theology at the *Augustana-Hochschule* in Neuen-dettelsau, editor of the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* and essayist at the Bad Boll Free Conferences in 1948 and 1949. While the presentation at times is somewhat abstract and the German will prove difficult for the younger Lutheran parson, Kinder's study deserves careful attention. Since the subject matter is so relevant for the Lutheran pastor in the proper application of Law and Gospel to himself and to his parishioners, we have expanded the customary book review into a review article.

Kinder presents the problem of Law and Gospel from the viewpoint of the Cross, i. e., from the entire atoning work of Christ as the center of God's dealing with man. He states that Law and Gospel are not two metaphysical concepts, two dialectical ideas, or two psychological categories more or less unrelated to each other, but rather "the cross with its two arms," which in "criss-cross" fashion (*sich ueberkreuzend*) contains both the preaching of the Law and the proclamation of the Gospel. Only the Cross can give to both Law and Gospel their proper cogency and relevance. Only the Cross can establish the proper relation between the *opus alienum* (revelation of God's wrath) and *opus proprium* (the proclamation of God's pardon). Apart from the Cross the *opus alienum* stands as an insoluble paradox to the *opus proprium* (pp. 5—12).<sup>2</sup>

This presentation may seem somewhat novel to American Lutherans, though the Formula of Concord in Article V uses a similar approach when in the exposition of God's *opus alienum* it adduces Luther's sermon for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity as an illustration that the preaching of the Cross is the most terrible declaration of God's wrath (*Trigl.*, 955). It is certainly true, that the Cross shows us clearly both *what man really is* and *what God has done* to save man from his lost

<sup>1</sup> *Gottes Gebote und Gottes Gnade im Wort vom Kreuz*. Von Ernst Kinder. Verlag des Evangelischen Pressverbandes fuer Baiern in Muenchen. (No. 7 of the *Kirchlich-theologische Hefte*.) 73 Seiten 6½×9. Preis: DM. 1.50.

<sup>2</sup> Werner Elert in his recent publication: *Zwischen Gnade und Ungnade* presents the relation of Law and Gospel in similar terminology. Cf. also his dogmatics *Der Christliche Glaube, s. v. Gesetz und Evangelium*, especially p. 171: "Gesetz und Evangelium stehen also unter der Anwendung der Kategorie der Offenbarung in dialektischem Verhaeltnis. Wenn das eine offenbart, wird das andere verhuellt; und wenn das zweite aufleuchtet, wird das erste dunkel."



condition. But the reason for the Germans' emphasis of the view that the Cross is both Law and Gospel is intended as the answer to the question: Which is the *usus praecipuus* of the Law; *usus elencticus* as in Lutheranism or *usus normativus* as in Calvinism? The answer to this question will determine whether the theologian can properly distinguish between Law and Gospel. It is Kinder's interest to set forth clearly that this difference is one of the most relevant questions confronting the Lutheran Church today.

## II

The charge has been raised against European (and American) Lutheranism that it has failed to speak the decisive word in all the recent world-shaking developments. The chief reason for the Lutheran Church's alleged failure is said to be the indissoluble conjunction which Lutherans have established between Law and Gospel and their insistence that the Law as well as the Gospel is to be preached only for soteriological purposes. In Ecumenical theology as well as in Barthian theology<sup>3</sup> Law and Gospel are presented in relation, not primarily to justification, but to sanctification, more specifically as to their contribution in solving the social problem, a responsibility which is said to rest upon the Church no less than upon the State. In his encounter with Calvinistic theology the Lutheran is therefore confronted with the question: Must the Lutheran pastor preach Law and Gospel only soteriologically or may he do so also sociologically? Since the unbelieving world will not accept the Gospel, should the Church not feel constrained to preach at least "one half" of its message, the Law in its *usus normativus*? The Lutheran must answer that it is impossible so to divide and compartmentalize Law and Gospel, whereby the *chief* and the only purpose of the Law is denied (p. 14).

The manner in which a person views the Law and Gospel indicates where his chief theological interest lies. If Law and Gospel are no longer viewed Christologically and soteriologically, then the entire Christian proclamation concerns itself no longer with the doctrine of justification, and a natural theology has taken the place of the Gospel. If the Law were an independent and self-existing entity, the natural man could quite readily and joyously preach the Law. But shall we defend the right of the Church's existence in the world by becoming engrossed in a secularistic program in which Christ is no longer the

<sup>3</sup> On Ecumenical Theology see Vol. II of *Man's Disorder and God's Design*. On Dialectical Theology see K. Barth: *Rechtfertigung und Recht*; *Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde*; H. Diem: *Evangelium und Gesetz*.

center? Shall we adopt a program which fails to evaluate the chief function of the Law in the light of the Cross only because it appeals to the natural man? (P. 21.) Dialectical theology seems to make much of the difference between Law and Gospel, for the very essence of dialectics is the paradox. But, strange as it may seem, dialectical theology has practically eliminated the dialectic between Law and Gospel, by viewing the Gospel only as the correlative of the Law. Thus dialectical theology has no dialectic in the *content*, but only in the *form*, and there is in reality not dialectic at all. If Luther frequently calls reason the "whore," then this must apply to reason in its most tantalizing and cunning form, in dialectics. "Denn mit der Dialektik laesst sich wirklich alles machen." A *theologia crucis*, however, is truly a dialectical theology, for it takes seriously the paradox which Kinder puts into this aphorism: Gott gegen Gott fuer den Menschen; der gnaedige Gott gegen den zornigen Gott uns zugute. (*Ibid.*) Neo-Orthodoxy, also some Neo-Lutherans, seemingly forget that God is the Author both of the verdict which condemns all and of the pardon which frees us all. And both truths are not only presented paradoxically in the message of the Cross, but are also solved there, and only there. All our theological thinking must constantly emanate from the Cross and remain under the Cross. Then we shall maintain the distinction between God's *opus alienum* and *proprium*.

This distinction is the brilliant light which was brought forth in the Reformation. In Roman theology the Cross is viewed as a capstone, not as the foundation stone, of theology, for Rome starts with natural philosophy on which it erects theology only as a superstructure. The Cross is only the final deduction which the theologian has made on the basis of alleged premises (p. 27). But a theology which considers the Cross merely as the solution of the various problems in theology will also find the solution without the Cross. Only the Word of the Cross as the starting point of our theology can lead us out of the straits and despair.<sup>4</sup> At this point Kinder in our opinion overstates his thesis. He maintains that only then is the Law really preached in its true revelatory character when it is brought into relation with a sin-conquering power. "Nur das hat offenbarende Wirkung, was tendenzgebend staerker als Suende ist, was suendenvergebende Kraft hat" (p. 32). We must, however, keep in mind, that the so-called *usus*

<sup>4</sup> Despair is an inadequate translation for the German *Angst*. If memory serves me correctly, Kirkegaard somewhere states that *Angst* is derived from *Enge*, and when so used, *Angst* does justice to the sinner's anxious (*aengstlich*) cry: "Wo soll ich fliehen hin?"

*paedagogicus*, just as the *usus elencticus*, is still the *opus alienum*. It is *Deus propter peccata damnans* in order that man may see the true character of sin and the absolute need of redemption.<sup>5</sup> It seems that Kinder has this in mind, for he directs himself against such teaching as transforms the message of the Cross into a *theologia gloriae*, forgetting that the Christian always remains under the Word of the Cross with its "Yes" and "No," with its curse and pardon. When Rome ascribes an independent value to the Law and views the "Gospel" only as a complement, or when the "enthusiasts" make the Law the source of good works, both have reduced the message of the Cross to a natural theology. The paradox between the "Yes" and "No" is completely obliterated. When man does not learn to know sin "from the Cross," he not only does not know God, but what is worse, he knows Him falsely (p. 51 ff.). Kinder's concern is to show that the *usus praecipuus* of the Law is to reveal the wrath of God and to convict the sinner of the justice of God's verdict (p. 56 f.). And that must be the concern of every Lutheran pastor.

### III

This raises the important question as to the place and significance of the so-called third use of the Law, *usus normativus*. The superscription of Article VI of the Formula of Concord reads: "Of the Third Use of the Law." The title is misleading. This article is directed against Poach and Otto, who said that the Law has no place whatsoever in preaching to *Christians*. The article, therefore, sets forth that in so far as the Christian still has the old man, he requires the preaching of the Law as a curb, a mirror, and a rule. The third use of the Law is not for the new man in the Christian, but for the old man who has rather peculiar notions as to the nature of truly God-pleasing works. The *usus normativus* may be said to be a negative factor in the Christian's new obedience, lest "they hit upon a holiness and devotion of their own and under the pretext of the Spirit of God set up a self-chosen worship." Article VI specifically states that the Law cannot stimulate and produce good works, but in its so-called third use is to serve as a restraint on the Christian's old Adam from going his own way. Since it is, of course, impossible to dissect the Christian biologically into the old and the new man, the pastor will constantly preach the Law to the Christian's total personality in its so-called three uses.

It is the concern of German theologians to show that there is a

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, III, 280. The Greek "schoolmaster" in Gal. 3:23 f. was not the teacher, but the servant who kept the son from going astray. Even as "the schoolmaster" the Law can bring the sinner only to the brink of hell.

diametrically different view concerning the third use of the Law between Lutherans and Calvinists. Werner Elert in a recent study<sup>6</sup> shows that Luther never used the term *usus tertius*. The concluding statement of Luther's second disputation against the Antinomians (1538, reprinted in *Historical Introductions to the Triglot*, p. 164) seemingly attributes to Luther the use of this phrase. Textual criticism, however, has shown that the section containing the description of the three uses of the Law is an interpolation. Only two of the nine rescripts contain the statement. The paragraphs in question agree almost verbatim with Melanchthon's *Loci*, who introduced the term *tertius usus* into Lutheran theology. According to Luther, and also according to the Melanchthon of the Apology, *lex SEMPER accusat*, and the Law is given to the Christian only in so far as he is still *sarx*. Even for the Christian the Law is never merely informative, but always retains its condemnatory character. — In Calvinism, however, *usus tertius* is made the chief purpose of the Law. Professor Elert claims that Calvin did this consciously and in direct opposition to Lutheran theology, for according to the *Institutes* (II, vii, 13) and the Geneva Confession (1536) the main function of the Law is to bring men to realize their obligation of obedience to their sovereign Lord. The only difference in the application of the Law to unbelievers and believers is that the latter are redeemed from the curse of the Law. Calvin holds that even the Gospel is subject to the final regulation of the Law, since the Gospel does not introduce a new way of salvation, but ratifies what the Law has already promised us. The Gospel differs from the Law only in the clarity with which it is manifested. Barth has accepted this view and speaks of the Gospel as the continuation of the Law in the New Testament. There is, as Elert points out, a diametrical difference between Lutheranism and Calvinism. In the latter the Law stands at the center of theology; in Lutheranism Law and Gospel are always opposed to each other. Lutheran theology is dialectical in the true sense, while the dialectics of Barthian Calvinism is only verbal. The difference between the two theologies comes to the surface particularly in the Church-State relationship. Lutherans teach that since the Law can only condemn, it must be proclaimed as the judgment of the world and not for world betterment. In Calvinistic theology the Church is expected to speak to the world by holding up to it in the name of Christ the Law of God as the only rule of life. It is typically Calvinistic to say that the Kingdom of God can be ushered in by waging wars.

<sup>6</sup> *Tertius usus legis in der lutherischen Theologie?* in *Zwischen Gnade und Ungnade* (p. 161 f.). Reprinted in the *Lutheran World Review*, January, 1949.

In his essay, Kinder follows a similar line of argument and shows that any attempt to make the third use of the Law its *usus praecipuus* is in the final analysis an attempt to secularize the Gospel. Only a theology which is oriented in the sovereignty of God can make the *usus tertius* the *usus praecipuus*. Neither in its first use as a curb nor in its third use as a norm is the Law, properly speaking, the Law, for in neither of these two uses does the Law function as that divine revelation which demands, threatens, and convicts the sinner. That is done only in the second use (p. 57). Kinder therefore rightly insists that the Church has no right to preach the Law for any other purpose than the *usus praecipuus*, that is, "from the Cross of Christ," in relation to the Church's *entire* proclamation. Preaching the Law merely as Law does not tell mankind anything new, since men know this from their reason and from history. The Church does not have the duty to prescribe new laws. And since the Church has no authority to preach the Law as an end in itself, it will accomplish nothing by such a message. Let us not be deceived to fall into the temptation as though we want to approximate the theology of the world which is orientated in a this-worldly viewpoint! (Pp. 61—64.) The Law is preached correctly when we keep in mind that, as Luther said, nothing is more intimately related than the wrath and the grace of God. In the light of the Cross, Law and Gospel cannot be viewed as *prior* or *posterior* to one another, but always as indissolubly joined together. In that same light, however, Law and Gospel, though indissolubly conjoined, will be preached unmixed and unmingled (p. 69 f.). This is what Kinder means when he speaks of "die Durchkreuzung des Gesetzes und Evangeliums." "Die Gottesfrage und die Menschheitsfrage werden im Kreuz Jesu Christi kreuzweise mit einander und aneinander aufgerissen und beantwortet zugleich" (p. 10).

F. E. MAYER

#### EZRA'S BIBLE SCHOOL

Nehemiah 8—10

The emphasis during several past decades on adult education, also within the Church, has ample Scriptural warrant. For instance, a study of the New Testament word *teleios* (as in James 3:2; Matt. 19:21; Col. 4:12; 1 Cor. 14:20; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 5:14) indicates that the Lord expects a maturing process and then a workable and working maturity on the part of adults. The example from the Old Testament gives us a glimpse of how Ezra conducted a project in adult education with good results. It illustrates again the old adage: Where there's a will, there's a way.

*I. The Bible Conference*

## A. Organization:

1. Time: The Civil New Year.
2. Meeting place: Public square near subterranean water galleries by Ophel.
3. Superintendent: Ezra, the learned doctor of priestly descent.
4. Faculty: Thirteen instructors and their assistants, the Levites.
5. Enrollment: "Men and women and all that could hear with understanding."
6. Attendance: "All the people . . . as one man."

## B. Nature of Activities:

1. Devotional Service: Conference began with solemn prayer, to which the people responded with "Amen, Amen" and reverent gestures and posture.
2. Ezra: Reading God's Word from parchment roll, from platform.
3. Assistance and relief from reading by thirteen instructors.
4. Sectional conferences, where read portions were explained to smaller groups by the thirteen and their assistants.

## C. Attitude of People:

"Ears of all were attentive."

## D. Results:

1. The people welcomed and accepted the instruction.
2. The people grieved over their national and personal sins.
3. The people repented in sincerity.
4. The people reverently supplicated and adored God.
5. The people obeyed and acted.
6. The people rejoiced with holy joy.
7. The people were filled with strength to do God's will.

*II. The Teachers' Meeting*

## A. Aim: To study the Word assiduously and more intensively.

## B. Instructor: Ezra, the superintendent and leader.

## C. Students:

1. The chief of the fathers of all people.
2. The priests.
3. The religious teachers called Levites.

## D. Results:

1. Better knowledge of divine Word and church practice.
2. Enthusiastic celebration over their religious blessings.
3. "And there was great gladness."



### III. *The Eight-Day Bible Institute*

- A. Course of Study and Text: "The Book of the Law of God."
- B. The Closing Day: Solemn convocation with impressive rites.
- C. Results:
  1. Deep study of God's Word.
  2. A day of prayer and penitence.
  3. Confession of opportunities neglected and sins committed.
  4. Joy over God's dwelling again in hearts of His people.
  5. Social reform — as in the case of mixed marriages.
  6. Civil reforms — as in the matter of debts, fallow land, temple tax for upkeep of the sanctuary.
  7. Religious reforms: Keeping festivals and Sabbaths, bringing voluntary gifts and "the tithes of our ground."
  8. Eighty-three family heads subscribing a written document pledging them to keep covenant with God.
  9. Material success and prosperity.
  10. Preparation for the coming Messiah.

#### *Application*

In this endeavor we observe:

First, *a holy courage in the face of obstinate obstacles*, such as

Growing hatred of the Church (secret strategies against it, open enmity, rude jesting, veiled threats);

Terrible economic and social conditions (usury, divorce, broken homes, low views of chastity, labor-capital strife, hard times, shortages of food, hard credit, mortgages and taxes, political unrest in Syria and Persia);

Terrific misbelief (as today, an era of religious syncretism, pagan cultism, modernist priests, hypocritical worship, low views of ministry, pride of self-esteem, work-righteousness);

Tentacles of indifference in the congregation (neglect of Sabbath, poor financial rating, the finest of everything for private comforts in new homes "while the church can wait" — even leaders guilty; sacrifices cheap in quality; lack of discipline among erring and sinning);

Ezra had a job before which even a stout heart would quail; yet he tackled it with a fervor worthy of wider imitation nowadays. Let us not be broken in spirit. (Cf. Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi on above obstacles.)

Second, *an illustration of progressive attitudes and methods* 24 centuries ago, in an era of decline.

Ezra might have said: "We'll hope and pray." If oldsters would prefer to reminisce on the good old days and even shed a few tears over the departed glory, not Ezra; he would offer a constructive, forward-looking program to build his people in the faith and right viewpoints.

Third, *a pattern of emphasis.*

Note that the Word of God is stressed. Ezra refused to twist time-honored doctrines, interpretations, and applications to fit liberalizing trends. And nothing is mentioned about entertainments to "hold the people." In fact, how the vast throng was housed and fed during those days receives no allusion.

Fourth, *an example of meeting a situation.*

Ezra does not excuse or postpone "due to local circumstances," but creates wholesome circumstances himself; does not wait until his fiscal office advances a good idea only to pick it apart, but has an idea himself and goes ahead with it. The local congregation is still the key in the Kingdom. There is no regimentation from the top down. Now, if your parish is a cross section of normal persons, you no doubt have "situations" galore: neglect or spasmodic attention to the means of grace; Communion averages below Luther's mark, where Christianity leaves off and paganism begins; begging and clubbing methods in finances; the attitude by parents of doing you personal service by sending their youngsters to your school; et cetera. Are you doing something about such problems? Doing *something* to magnify the Word and Christian life is better than moaning. Have an idea and go ahead with it. Meet *your* situation as *you* have been called to do. Don't wait for official machinery to push you. With your Lutheran doctrinal treasures and your present physical setup, start meeting your particular situation now. Ezra did, and the Church profited.

Blue Hill, Nebr.

VICTOR C. FRANK

#### BASIC BOOKS FOR THE EXEGETE

We submit a partial list of books now available for Old and New Testament studies. The books may be ordered through Concordia Publishing House.

*Biblia Hebraica*, Rudolf Kittel, American Bible Society, New York.

*Novum Testamentum Graece*, Eberhard Nestle, 19th edition, Privilegierte Wuertembergische Bibelanstalt, Stuttgart, Germany.

*Septuaginta*, Alfred Rahlfs, two volumes, Privilegierte Wuertembergische Bibelanstalt, Stuttgart, Germany.

*Hebrew-German-English Lexicon*, Ludwig Koehler, E. J. Brill, Leiden, Holland; only the first installment for the present, but the others will soon follow. (*The Hebrew-English Lexicon* by Brown-Driver-Briggs in a revised form, ready in 1939, was held up by the war and should soon appear; it seems to be a work done quite independently from the Koehler dictionary across the channel.)

*Theologisches Woerterbuch*, Gerhard Kittel, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, Germany.

*The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, Moulton and Milligan, 1949, Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, London (for a little more than half the price charged by American firms).

*Neutestamentliche Grammatik*, Blass und Debrunner, 1943, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Goettingen, Germany.

*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, James H. Moulton, 1949, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

*Apostolic Fathers*, two volumes, Kirsopp Lake, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

*Bible and Spade*, S. L. Caiger, Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, London.

*Keil & Delitzsch's Commentary* on the whole Old Testament is now available from Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 3, Mich., at \$3.50 a volume. Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, may be slow in coming. Get Leupold's commentary on Genesis and Daniel, and all the rest in Keil-Delitzsch, and you'll have the best there is on the Old Testament.

The following important books will soon appear on the market: *Concordance to the Greek Testament*, W. F. Moulton—being reprinted.

*The Four Gospels*, B. H. Streeter—being reprinted.

*Eusebius*, Volume I, Loeb Classical Library—in the binding.

*The International Critical Commentary on Kings* by the late J. A. Montgomery (who also did the volume on Daniel) may soon be expected. Dr. Bowman of the Chicago University is submitting his commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah to the printer this year; his Aramaic grammar is half done.

St. Louis, Mo.

W. F. BECK

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### THE POPE'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

On December 24, Pope Pius XII, "Bishop of Rome and Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, Sovereign of the Temporal Dominion of the Holy Roman Church and Sovereign of Vatican City" (quoted in *Yearbook of American Churches*, 1949 edition, p. 81) officially inaugurated the "Jubilee Year" with all the pomp and pageantry of a medieval crusade. In December last, all roads seemed to lead to Rome. As the Pope said in his Christmas message — with more eloquence indeed than devotion to historical accuracy —: "Without privilege of race or class, Rome is the fatherland of all; every Christian can and should say: 'Rome is my fatherland.' Here God's supernatural providence over souls is more particularly in evidence; here the saints acquired the norm and inspiration of their heroism; this land of benediction knew the triumphs of the martyrs and was the training ground of dauntless confessors. Here is the immovable rock to which your hopes are anchored; it is the site and ancient 'trophaeum' of the glorious tomb of the Prince of the Apostles on which rests the chair of perennial authority of the Vicar of Christ." *Life* magazine, in its issue of December 26, featured pictures of Michel Angelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. The *Saturday Evening Post* in its issue of December 24 ran an article on the "world's most famous church" [St. Peter's in Rome]. Newspapers gave front-page space to column after column on the happenings in Rome on December 24, and some published a whole series of articles on the significance of the "Jubilee Year." And on December 24, the radio kept Americans informed on what was taking place in St. Peter's square, even enabling them to hear the vibrations of the silver hammer used by the Pope as he entered through the mysterious door. Not since the last convocation of cardinals a few years ago, did the public means of communication allocate so much time and space to affairs in the Catholic Church.

But for Catholics and also many non-Catholics the most significant aspect of the beginning of the "Jubilee Year" was Pope Pius' Christmas message delivered by him on December 23. From this message, we single out only the Pope's appeal to all non-Catholics to join the Catholic Church. The appeal reads: "Oh, that this Holy Year could

welcome also the great return to the one true church, awaited over the centuries, of so many who though believing in Jesus Christ are for various reasons separated from her! With unspeakable groanings, the spirit, who is in the hearts of good people, today cries out imploringly the same prayer of our Lord: 'That they may be one' (John 17:11). With good reason men are anxious about the effrontery with which the united front of militant atheism advances; and the old question is now voiced aloud: why are there still schisms? When will all the forces of the spirit and of love be harmoniously united? If on other occasions an invitation to unity has been sent forth from this apostolic see, on this occasion we repeat it more warmly and paternally; we feel that we are urged by the pleadings and prayers of numerous believers scattered over the whole earth, who after suffering tragic and painful events turn their eyes toward this apostolic see as toward an anchor of salvation for the whole world."

To this appeal we reply as follows. We, too, deplore the schisms and divisions in Christendom, and we say with the confessors who in 1530 signed the *Augsburg Confession* (*Triglotta*, p. 41) that "we are prepared to confer amicably concerning all possible ways and means, in order that we may come together, as far as this may be honorably done, and, the matter between us on both sides being peacefully discussed without offensive strife, the dissension, by God's help, may be done away and brought back to one true accordant religion; for as we are all under one Christ and do battle under Him, we ought to confess the one Christ . . . and everything ought to be conducted according to the truth of God; and this it is what, with most fervent prayers, we entreat of God."

"The truth of God." That was for the heroic Lutheran confessors of the sixteenth century, as it is for Lutherans today, the Holy Scriptures. The divisions in Christendom can be removed in a God-pleasing way only if all who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord are ready to be guided in all religious matters wholly by the Holy Scriptures. Will Pope Pius XII seriously consider such a proposal? Furthermore, Lutherans of our day subscribe unreservedly to the declarations adopted by the confessors at Smalcald in 1537, which read in part: "The Roman Pontiff claims for himself [in the first place] that by divine right he is [supreme] above all bishops and pastors [in all Christendom]. Secondly, he adds also that by divine right he has both swords, i. e., the authority also of bestowing and transferring kingdoms [enthroning and deposing kings, regulating secular dominions, etc.]. And, thirdly, he

says that to believe this is necessary for salvation. And for these reasons the Roman bishop calls himself [and boasts that he is] the vicar of Christ on earth. These three articles we hold to be false, godless, tyrannical, and quite pernicious to the Church." ("Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope," *Triglotta*, p. 503.) If Pope Pius XII is ready to renounce the titles and honors which he claims to hold by divine right; if he is ready to declare his position in the Church is one of human origin; if he will have his Church disavow the infamous dogma of the infallibility of the Pope (decreed July 18, 1870); if he will give Christendom the assurance that he will not declare "the bodily ascension of Mary" a dogma of the Church; and if he is prepared to confer with non-Catholic Christians as a brother in Christ in keeping with Matt. 23:8-10, then also Lutherans will take his plea seriously.

Considering, and this by way of conclusion, how the Pope has, especially within recent years, succeeded to influence American thought, to promote the Catholic faith, and to demonstrate his power in virtually every area of public life; considering also how impotent much anti-Catholic thought and action in our country is for the reason that it often fails correctly to diagnose the true character of the hierarchy's claims and designs, Lutherans in our land will do well in this "Jubilee Year" to rethink and restudy the objections of the Lutheran confessors of the sixteenth century to the power and pretensions of the Roman Church as these objections are so clearly expressed in the *Confessions* of our Church. On the positive side, Lutheran pastors will be particularly aware of their grave responsibility to proclaim and teach with persuasive clarity the cardinal principles of the Lutheran Reformation: *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, and *sola Scriptura*.

P. M. B.

#### HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE

On October 9, 1949, a bronze statue of Leif Erikson was unveiled on the capitol grounds in St. Paul, Minn. The inscription on the granite base reads: "Leif Erikson, Discoverer of America, 1000 A. D." Among the many Scandinavians who participated in the ceremony was at least one Catholic by the name of Edward A. Harrigan. This participant reports his experiences at the unveiling of the statue in *America* (December 3) under the title "A Catholic Looks at Lutherans."

In his report Mr. Harrigan makes the point that the Scandinavian Lutherans must have been chagrined when they heard the speaker, who quoted from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, tell the audience that Leif Erikson was a Catholic. "As I stood there under the overcast sky that October Sunday afternoon," so Mr. Harrigan muses, "I could not help



but feel more than a little sad for those good people whose ancestors were robbed of their faith more than 400 years ago. They did not revolt. In 1526, King Christian III forced heresy on an unwitting and unwilling people, as the only religion tolerated by the crown." He then continues to inform the reader, in a vein of complete dissatisfaction with the situation, that "in Norway and Sweden, with a combined population of 9,970,000, there are only 20,400 Catholics; Denmark has 20,000 Catholics in a population of nearly four million. All 20,000 Greenlanders, whose country is a colonial possession of Denmark, belong to the Lutheran state religion."

A few comments are in order. To be sure, Leif Erikson was a Catholic, and we hope the kind of Catholic who believed wholly in the substitutionary suffering and death of Jesus Christ and not in the alleged saving merits of Mary and the saints. But even though Leif Erikson was a Catholic, we ask, in current American style, "So what?" Doesn't Mr. Harrigan know that in our country we honor national heroes regardless of the religion they professed? Genuine Americans honor Columbus not because he was a Catholic, but because, owing to his discovery, Europeans began to come over in ever-increasing numbers to settle this land of ours. We honor Benjamin Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and many others not because they were non-Catholics, but because they made great contributions to the well-being and development of our country. This is the American way. This is also the Scriptural way. Peter, "Prince of the Apostles" according to Catholic teaching, exhorts Christians, "Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:17), without adding a reservation having to do with the religious affiliation of the king. Paul writes to the Romans: "Render therefore to all their dues . . . honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13:7), without adding a conditional clause to the effect "if the ministers of the state are Christian or otherwise deserving of honor." That is one of the strange things about Lutherans that they respect and esteem also those who, though not of their faith, are used by God, the Ruler also of the "kingdom to the left," to promote the common welfare of the state.

But Mr. Harrigan's delight in telling Lutherans that Leif Erikson was a Catholic is a very minor matter. More serious is his charge that Lutheranism is a heresy, for it was Lutheranism which came to the Scandinavian countries very early in the Reformation era. The charge is an old one. From the Catholic point of view "the Reformation was the last of the great heresies." Much depends on who it is who brands others as being heretics. From the Jewish leaders' point of view, Jesus

Christ was a heretic, also Stephen, Paul, and others. From the pagan Roman point of view the Christian martyrs were heretics. From the Catholic point of view, Wycliffe, Hus, and Luther were heretics. The question is: "Who is a heretic from God's point of view? Who is a heretic from the point of view of the Holy Scriptures, the complete and final revelation of God?" If Mr. Harrigan will take the time to find out who heretics are according to the Scriptures, he will discover that the terms "heresy" and "heretics" apply to those who deny the clear teachings of Scripture and in their place "teach for doctrines the commandments of men" and who, as the name implies, cause divisions in the Church. Let him draw his own inferences. P. M. B.

#### IS KARL BARTH DRAWING CLOSER TO ORTHODOX THEOLOGY?

This question is justified in view of the fact that Karl Barth, to use his own words, has discarded the "eggshells of philosophical systematizing," and in his theologizing has arrived at a "Christological concentration," that is to say, at a point where he has found it necessary "to think through and set forth once more and in a totally other way what he said before as a theology of the grace of God in Jesus Christ." These statements are taken from articles which Barth published some years ago in the *Christian Century* regarding the theological change which occurred in him in recent years. In *Evangelische Theologie* (Dezember 1948, Heft 6) these articles are published under the heading *Parergon — Karl Barth ueber sich selbst* (pp. 268 ff.) in the German original, and they afford the reader valuable insights into his later theological orientation. It is interesting to note that Barth declares that as he decided to treat theology primarily as a theology of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, he was prompted "in a heightened degree to a critical evaluation of church tradition, as also of the Reformers, and, in particular, of Calvin" (*loc. cit.*, p. 272). In other words, Karl Barth is honest enough to tell his readers that his is *not* the theology of ecclesiastical tradition, of the Reformers, and, above all, of Calvin. The same he clearly states in a foreword to his work *Die christliche Lehre nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus*, brought to public attention by its publishers, the Chr. Kaiser Verlag, Muenchen, in *Evangelische Theologie* (April 1949, Heft 10). In this book notice there is offered the following quotation from Barth's foreword: "There is given here no historical exegesis of the Heidelberg Catechism; not the Heidelberg Catechism, but primarily the doctrine as such is reviewed and treated. Nor should the title say that here Heidelberg orthodoxy is being presented. We no longer live in the 16th century, but in the 20th. When

one occupies himself with Christian doctrine today, it makes no sense to be rooted to the 16th century as charmed and to adhere as inflexibly and unalterably as possible to that which was said then and there. That would be a procedure not in agreement with the Reformation. The Heidelberg Catechism directs us to Scripture, and according to this it must be measured." John Horsch once applied to a certain liberal who expressed his heterodoxy in orthodox terms the words of Isaac: "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau" (Gen. 27:22). Also in neo-orthodoxy there is heard the voice of orthodoxy, while there appear in it very palpably the hands of liberal orientation and investigation. The Heidelberg Catechism, in the opinion of this writer, was written by men who regarded Holy Scripture as the divinely inspired Word of God and so as the objective divine truth. This position of Reformed orthodoxy Barth has never held. His own Word of God is not the Bible, but something that is entirely subjective and therefore variable and transient. Were Barth to draw the conclusions which his premises warrant, there would be but little difference between his neo-orthodoxy and the crass Modernism which his system of theology has done so much to deprive of its philosophical foundations.

J. T. MUELLER

#### LUTHER'S EXPOSITION OF LUKE 16:9

Under this heading, Otto Hof, in *Evangelische Theologie* (Oktober 1948, Heft 4) presents in a well-documented essay Luther's explanation of Luke 16:9 and similar passages. In summing up his finds, the writer says: "In the question of the justification of man before God [according to Luther] works do not count. The inner [spiritual] righteousness before God is obtained by man solely by faith in Christ. . . . The passages regarding works concern and regulate the life among men. They do not deal with the question how we are justified before God, but [tell us] that we should prove our inner righteousness by means of external righteousness, and these are indeed two things. (Luther: 'From this you see that there is a great difference between being pious and being recognized as pious, or between becoming pious and proving piety.' W. 10, III, 286, 30.) For this reason we must well keep apart the passages that treat of faith and such as deal with works and assign them to their respective spheres. (Luther: 'If we are to decide how this meaning can be maintained, it must be carefully considered that the passages concerning works pertain to the external man [sanctification] and those of faith to the internal [justification]. W. 20, 466, 20. Again: 'God has divided me into two: here and there. Therefore divide the passages according to their places.' W. 17, I, 375, 13.) We dare

not mingle them into each other, though also we dare not separate them from one another. (Luther: 'If you want to cook them into each other and say, as declares the Gospel, that they make [us] friends before God, that the text does not say.' W. 27, 302, 14.) For if you do that, then you will have the devil ('so wird der Teufel daraus'), since then man will either get to work-righteousness or to a 'faith' which forgets that it also owes love. In this respect the passages which speak of works have a discriminating function, for they serve to expose those who make themselves a 'faith'; their illusion is made manifest by their lack of works. (Luther: 'On account of such an imaginary and fictitious faith Scripture offers such passages concerning works, not in order that we should become pious through works, but in order that we may exhibit the external proof and difference between a dead and a true faith; for wherever faith is sincere, it does that which is good; if it does not do that which is good, it is surely a dream and an illusion of faith. W. 10, III, 286, 20.) Beyond this, these passages [concerning works] have, within their proper scope, a positive value. Because we are sluggish in the exercise of our faith, we need admonition, and Christ applies that to us in this friendly way. So considered, Luke 16:9 and the other passages which treat of works are indeed not the whole of the Christian doctrine, but certainly an important part of it." While the article perhaps conveys to us no new truth, it well reminds us of something in the Christian doctrine which we are apt to forget, and the writer's profound Luther research suggests how much doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness we may find in the great Reformer's writings if only we take the time to look for them.

J. T. MUELLER

#### PRESENT TRENDS IN PROTESTANT THOUGHT

Nels F. S. Ferre, in *Religion in Life* (Summer Number, 1948; Vol. XVII, No. 3), under the given heading, published an article which was esteemed so highly in Germany that it was presented in an excellent and complete translation in *Evangelische Theologie* (Jahrgang 1948/1949; Juni 1949, Heft 12). The general conclusions which the writer draws may interest also conservative theologians. We read: "(1) Literalistic fundamentalism is strongly on the decline and is therefore defensive, whether evasively or aggressively, and yet also looking for a constructive way out while rightly cherishing its deepest inner truth. (2) Yesterday's liberalism is also on the wane, but it cannot easily be surrendered until its insistence on intellectual honesty is adequately met; until, that is, Christian truth is seen in relation to, and confirmed by, truth in general; (3) Swedish theology will shortly be

far better known here and will loom up as strong along several lines, but the main contribution it seems likely to make is the clarification of the meaning and centrality of *Agape* for Christian faith. (4) Existentialism, or neo-orthodoxy, is strong in its central affirmations: theocentricity, the centrality of Christ for Christian faith, the stress on revelation as authority, and its mood of faith. But, except for some borderline work, it has lived mostly in a negative relation to all other provinces of thought and life, education and civilization. I think that in general we must accept its affirmations and deny its negations. For the latter we must substitute constructive work to integrate our seeing into whole-vision for the sake of a confused and shattered world. It seems likely that we may be in for dangerous drives toward a narrow biblicism. In days of stress the Bible seems the most available external authority, but *no theology that denies a free, open, and all-inclusive method can be lastingly adequate* [italics in the original]. The centrality of faith must not mean the murdering of reason. Such an assassination will be eventually revenged by an ineffectual intellectualism. We need both to keep faith central and yet to give reason its proper place as faith's check and challenge, confirming its conclusions when both faith and reason are right" (p. 345). We are grateful to Dr. Ferre for telling us so frankly that present-day liberal Protestantism means to continue its old program of having faith checked and challenged by reason. The same trend is noticeable also in Swedish theology and in existentialism or neo-orthodoxy, though in different ways and degrees. Ferre fears "dangerous drives toward a narrow biblicism" and avers that "such assassination [of reason, as found in conservative biblical theology] will be eventually revenged by an ineffectual intellectualism." But the very opposite is true. Ferre reproves the negative character of existentialism, but even more than neo-orthodoxy the extreme liberalism in our country, known as modernism, has terminated in an "ineffectual intellectualism," as long ago John Horsch in his *Modern Religious Liberalism* pointed out. Not the murdering of reason, but the murdering of faith is bound to terminate in ineffectual intellectualism. Dr. Ferre is wrong also in stating that fundamentalism is on the decline. If by that term he means Biblical conservatism, he may be reminded that this is very much alive and pre-eminently active in spreading the Gospel, vitalizing Christian education, and strengthening Christian civilization. In fact, the only thing that is spiritually effectual today is the conservative type of Christianity which liberalism so unjustly condemns as "narrow biblicism."

J. T. MUELLER



## DR. THEODOR HEUSS, AN ACTIVE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN

It is gratifying, as *Fuer Kirche und Gemeinde. Evangelisches Sonntagsblatt fuer Baden* (September 25, 1949) points out, that Dr. Theodor Heuss, the president of the German Western Republic, is an active and professing evangelical Christian, who has been deeply interested in the Evangelical Church of Germany and its charitable projects since his youth. His interest attaches above all to the Evangelical Academy at Bad Boll. Early in his youth Dr. Heuss became an intimate friend of Pastor Wurster of Heilbronn, who later became professor of practical theology at Tuebingen. He joined the Christian-Social movement advocated by such men as Adolf Stoecker and Friedrich Naumann, assisted Friedrich Naumann as editor of the well-known periodical *Die Hilfe*, and later became its editor in chief, living in Heilbronn, where, in the course of time, he was elected delegate to the *Reichstag*. He served the German parliament till 1933, when he was forced out of office by the growing influence of Hitler. After the Second World War he was minister of public worship and education (*Kultusminister*) in the territory of Wuerttemberg-Baden, making his home in Stuttgart. As Dr. Heuss, so also his wife has been very active in church work and is a devoted member of the Church. Men of the type of Dr. Heuss, Dr. Gerstenmaier, and others, who are now serving the German people in public office, do noble service, counteracting not only the influence of Communism, but also that of Roman Catholicism, which by its aggressive activism is making itself strongly felt in German politics.

J. T. MUELLER

## THE PRIMARY PROBLEM UNDERLYING FIRST CORINTHIANS

*Evangelische Theologie* (April 1949; Heft 10) offers a very helpful study by Heinrich Schlier on the subject *Ueber das Hauptanliegen des 1. Briefes an die Korinther*. The Letter, he says, aims to edify the Corinthian congregation by instructing it as regards the relation of *gnosis* to *agape*, or the relation of knowledge to love. The Corinthian *ecclesia* was dominated by enthusiasm. Due largely to its rich endowment with *charismata*, it regarded itself as being already in the *teleion*, the stage of perfection, and so able to lead a pneumatic, charismatic life, free from the shackles of the Law and already sharing the prerogative of the resurrection. It therefore repudiated the Apostolic *kerygma*, believing that God reveals Himself in Christ by means of personal, pneumatic revelations mediated by the charismatic gifts of the Spirit. Against this enthusiastic immediacy of revelation St. Paul emphasizes the necessity of the Apostolic *kerygma*, which, on the one hand, supplies the true



*gnosis* and, on the other, establishes the Christian Church. This emphasis on the Apostolic *kerygma* was necessary because the Corinthian enthusiasts misunderstood in principle their Christian existence. They sought Christ, their justification, and their Christian life in the charismatic endowments and so lost themselves in an antinomianism which countenanced even *porneia*. In all this the writer finds a very earnest warning against enthusiasm in general, which seeks the Christian *gnosis* not in the Apostolic Word, but in forms of subjective feeling, and so ultimately loses all Christian knowledge and, besides, violates the principle of Christian love. One regrets that the writer does not emphasize, in this connection, the objective truth of Scripture, but his warning against enthusiasm certainly is well in place.

J. T. MUELLER

#### GOETHE ON MARRIAGE AND CHRISTIANITY

There is in Helsingfors, Finland, a German evangelical congregation, whose pastor, Licentiate G. Sentzke, is the able editor of a church paper called *Deutsch-Evangelisch in Finland*. A recent number, one of many sent to us, reports an opinion on marriage and Christianity by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, the bicentennial of whose birth on August 28, 1749, was observed in wide areas. Goethe writes: "Whoever attacks marriage and undermines by word or deed this foundation of all social morality, must deal with me; or if I cannot master him, I will have nothing to do with him. Marriage is the beginning and culmination of all culture. It makes the ruthless gentle, and the refined has no better opportunity to prove his gentility. Marriage must be indissoluble, for it is the source of so much happiness that any special unhappiness must be regarded as nothing in comparison to it. But why do we want to speak of unhappiness? From time to time man is overcome by impatience, and then it pleases him to regard himself as unhappy. If he permits the moment to pass, he will consider himself lucky that something [marriage] which has lasted so long still exists. There is no adequate reason for divorce. In human life there are so many joys and sorrows that it is impossible to compute how much married people owe each other. It is a debt which only eternity can pay off. Marriage at times may become inconvenient; that I certainly believe, but so it is right. Are we not married also to our conscience, and do we not often like to get rid of it, because it is even more inconvenient than ever a man or a woman can become?" This favorable opinion on marriage by Goethe must not be discounted because his own life did not always conform to the lofty demands of this divine Law. It rather deserves the greater attention since it comes from a person who, though faulty

in his life, nevertheless had, in a rich measure, the gift of appreciating true values. Similarly Goethe rated very highly the Christian Church and religion, though he himself stood aloof from Christianity. In another copy of *Deutsch-Evangelisch in Finland*, Pastor Sentzke quotes from Adolf Harnack's *Die Religion Goethes in der Epoche seiner Vollendung* the following statement of the great Weimar poet: "The Christian religion is a powerful reality (*Wesen*), upon which fallen and suffering humanity from time to time and again and again has raised itself up; and as this efficacy is ascribed to it, it is [recognized as] exalted above all philosophy and [as] requiring from it no support." But what was it, we ask, that Goethe admired in Christianity? In the same report on Goethe's attitude to the Christian religion we read also this paragraph: "In the Gospels there is effective the reflection of a sublimity (*Hohheit*) which radiated from the Person of Christ and is so divine as never before the divine appeared upon earth. If I am asked whether it lies in my nature to render to Him adoring reverence, I reply: By all means! I bow before Him as the divine revelation of the highest principle of morality." Goethe appreciated the ethical values both in Christianity and in the institution of marriage. He neither understood nor desired the Gospel of God's redeeming love in Christ Jesus.

J. T. MUELLER

#### OUR OBLIGATION TO THE JEWS

The Jews are still with us. In fact, their number is increasing, largely because of accessions from Europe. As a group they are displaying an amazing degree of cohesion, especially in their support of Jewish refugees and of the Israel state in Palestine. Does the Church have an obligation to the Jews? It has never denied it. But perhaps the time has come when also our own Church must again take very seriously its own obligation to the Jews.

As Harold Floreen points out in the *Lutheran Companion* of December 7, there are, roughly speaking, three kinds of Jews. There are the orthodox Jews (over 3,000 synagogs) who cling to the traditional minute regulations, including those having to do with kosher foods, and who hold to the divine inspiration of the Old Testament as well as to that of the Talmud. There are also the Reformed, or Liberal, Jews (about 360 temples) who seek to adjust themselves to modern life. They reject the bondage of minute regulations and the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures and accept the findings of Higher Criticism. The belief in a personal Messiah, held by the orthodox Jews, is replaced by the Reformed Jews by the belief that the Jewish nation itself is to be regarded as Messianic. There are, finally, the conservative

Jews (about 320 congregations) who are a kind of halfway house, revering much of tradition, but also maintaining the need of adjustment to modern life.

With respect to the reasons why Jews reject Christ, Mr. Floreen observes: "To be sure, Christ was originally rejected by the majority in Israel largely because He did not satisfy the materialistic and nationalistic aspirations which had become attached to the Messianic hope, and by the leadership because He appeared to threaten their standing. Materialism plays a part today, too; but, far more than we realize, the rejection of Christ by Jews is a matter of tradition and the consequence of early training. Hence, their failure to accept Him quickly does not necessarily represent a malicious attitude on the part of each individual, for the average individual knows little concerning the true character of Christ. Furthermore, the traditional rejection unfortunately appears to be justified [so many Jews believe] in each generation because of the animosity and persecution suffered at the hands of many professing Christians. Christ is thus judged by the attitudes and actions of His professed followers."

We do have an obligation also to the Jews. As individuals we are to witness to them as we meet them in the community where we live. As a Church we cannot escape the responsibility of including in our efforts to evangelize every people, also the Jews. P. M. B.

#### STATUS OF LEGALIZED STERILIZATION

In *America* (Catholic weekly, December 10), Edward Duff critically reviews an article titled "Preventive Sterilization in 1948," contributed to the *Journal* of the American Medical Association by Clarence J. Gamble, M.D., and expresses his complete disapproval of legalized sterilization. From his review we are submitting Mr. Duff's statistics:

"Our American venture in eugenic sterilization at government expense began in Indiana in 1907. Today, 27 States have such laws on their statute books. Under these laws 49,207 men and women have had their reproductive powers mutilated in expectation of thus decreasing the number of future mental defectives. California . . . has used the law most extensively, supplying 19,042 cases to the total. Delaware has the dubious honor of leading the States in the most rigorous application of the law last year. Out of every 100,000 of its population, Delaware sterilized 11.4 in 1948. North Dakota, North Carolina, and Iowa followed on the list with decreasing percentages. In 1948, of 1,336 legal sterilizations, insanity was the ground in 28 per cent of the cases, feeble-mindedness in 67 per cent." P. M. B.

## ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

A \$100,000 Christian elementary school is being built at La Fayette, Ind., by the La Fayette Christian School Society, a Protestant non-denominational group of parents. The school, scheduled to open in September, 1950, will teach kindergarten classes as well as the first eight grades, welcoming children of any denomination. The curriculum will include religious instruction.

The American Bible Society's Advisory Council announced that 400,000 Bibles will be shipped in 1950 to the Eastern Zone of Germany, and 200,000 to the West. A budget of \$3,146,000 was adopted by the Advisory Committee for the Society's 1950 program, an increase of \$800,000 over last year. Plans for 1950 call for publication of more than 13,500,000 Scriptures.

Dr. James De Forest Murch, president of the Evangelical Press Association, spoke before the second annual Christian Writers' Conference in Wheaton, Ill., and said that writers are going to have a lot to say on whether the world receives the message of Christianity or continues its race to atomic doom. Writers from eight States and Canada attended the sessions sponsored by the Christian Writers' Institute, which was launched to stimulate interest in, and improve techniques of, religious journalism.

At least two hundred pulpit exchanges between Northern Baptist and Disciples of Christ clergymen took place throughout the country on Sunday, November 13. The pulpit exchanges were recommended in a joint commission report looking toward merging the two churches. The report, which visualizes consummation of the union by 1955, was approved at the last annual meetings of both denominations.

The North Carolina Baptist Convention, meeting at Raleigh, N. C., adopted the following points on the problems of racial and minority groups: 1) All Christians are brothers in Christ. 2) Every member of a racial or minority group is a person and should be treated as such. 3) No racial group because of biological inheritance is superior or inferior to any other group. 4) The members of all racial and minority groups should be recognized as citizens constituting a state under one government with equal rights. 5) All citizens have the right to equal privileges and treatment in our local, State, and Federal Governments. 6) All racial and minority groups have a right to be represented by members of their own group or bodies concerned with the general welfare of the community—police, education, courts, elections, etc.

7) Christians should protest injustices and discriminations against any group and strive to promote community good will between all groups. 8) The members of every group should eliminate from their speech terms which degrade or show contempt for other groups, especially in the presence and the teaching of children. 9) Christians must believe and teach that prejudice or ill will toward any group is unchristian.

Delegates to the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Baptist General Convention adopted a resolution banning churches which recognize non-Baptist Baptism or open Communion or which join the Federal Council of Churches or the World Council of Churches. Dr. M. E. Ramay, the Convention's retiring president, introduced the resolution as a substitute for a constitutional amendment which he first proposed at the 1948 meeting in Muskogee. The resolution, Ramay explained, would mean that any church practicing "Modernism" could not send "messenger" to the State convention.

Vatican officials have disclosed that a process has been started in the archdiocese of Vienna, Austria, for the canonization of Emperor Charles, last of the Hapsburg monarchs of Austria-Hungary, who died in exile in 1922, four years after abdicating his throne.

Lack of religious teaching in American public schools was said in Providence, R. I., to be a chief reason for Protestant-Catholic tension in this country. Speaking at the last public hearing by a special State commission on released-time, Edwin Gora, who has taught school in Poland, Germany, and India, said there is less feeling in Europe between Protestants and Catholics than in this country. Five Roman Catholic priests, a pastor of the Augustana Lutheran Church, the State deputy of the Knights of Columbus, and a Providence school teacher who spoke as a Catholic layman, favored released-time legislation.

John S. Gibson, volunteer worker for the Catholic Youth Guidance Board of the archdiocese of Newark, N. J., believes that juvenile delinquency may be curbed by the use of infiltration tactics. Speaking at the annual convention of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, Gibson said the infiltration technique was employed by winning over one boy of a neighborhood gang and then helping him to organize a recreational and guidance program designed to keep the other youngsters out of mischief.

A report prepared for the annual meeting in Washington, D. C., of the American Roman Catholic hierarchy said the two most important



events of the year in Catholicism were the Vatican's excommunication of Communism's supporters and the question of Church-State relationships in the United States. The report stressed the impossibility of appraising the break between Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia and Cominform but urged that the United States condition its support of Tito by a continuing demand for a cessation of religious persecution in Yugoslavia. "The question of Church-State relationship" in the United States, the report said, "continued to be debated widely" and had an "unusually important bearing" on the discussions about the proposed Federal aid to education, which in some respects "overshadowed" all other concerns of the National Catholic Welfare Conference during 1949. The report also stated that 2,304,965 pupils were enrolled in Catholic grade schools, 482,672 in secondary schools, 299,807 in colleges and universities, and 23,965 in seminaries.

Seventh-Day Adventists in this country plan to visit six million homes in 1950. The mass visitation will take place on March 4, June 3, and September 2. Plans for the visitation were explained to church leaders by Elder Lemuel E. Esteb of South Lancaster, Mass., who declared, "It's time for religion to put on its boots and walk out to where the people are." — A budget for \$16,000,000 for special purposes, \$2,400,000 more than the highest previous budget, was adopted by the annual fall conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in St. Louis. Of this total \$9,000,000 is for overseas expansion, including \$412,500 for radio programs in foreign countries, and \$300,000 to place ten missionary families in Japan.

A series of seminars for Christian citizens sponsored by Protestant groups will be held in Washington, D. C., during the first five months of 1950. They will be motivated for three separate audiences, classified as students, adults, and churchmen. Seminars for both high school and college students will be sponsored by Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Quaker organizations. The National Intercollegiate Christian Council of the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. will sponsor two seminars for college students, and the United Christian Youth Movement will sponsor one seminar. Adult seminars will be independently sponsored by the Friends' Committee on National Legislation, the Department of Social Welfare of the United Christian Missionary Society of the Disciples of Christ, and the Brethren's Service Commission. The churchmen's seminars will be a joint project of the Presbyterian (U. S. A.), Methodist, Northern Baptist, Congregational-Christian churches, and the United Council of Church Women.



More than 3,500,000 Protestants in Germany's Eastern Zone are without adequate pastoral care because of a lack of clergymen due to Soviet restrictions on theological training. Dr. Martin Fischer of the Berlin Church Academy said that the Soviet Zone needs 900 pastors to bring the ministry up to normal strength. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Saxony has again called upon Soviet occupation officials to return church property of thirteen church institutions confiscated during the Nazi regime.

Financial aid from American church groups has put the Church of Finland in a strong position. The major American gift was one million dollars from the Lutheran churches in America associated with the National Lutheran Council. Of this amount 60 per cent has already been transferred to the Finnish Church and is being used to reconstruct sixteen churches destroyed during the war. Contributions from American churches also helped in the building of a new Bible center to replace the one lost in the transfer of Karelia to Russia. All kinds of religious books as well as Bibles will be printed at the center. — A Communist attempt to remove religious instruction from the school curriculum met with failure. Since then the Communists have been relatively silent on the whole question of the Church, apparently in the hope of not alienating potential members of the party who are church members. For its part the Church has had no formal break with the Communists and has succeeded, to a large extent, in keeping the children of Communists in its Sunday schools. — Ninety-six per cent of the population are members of the national Church. Of the remaining 4 per cent, half are members of some other Church; the largest single group among these is the Greek Catholic Church with 70,000 members; Roman Catholics, Jews, Methodists, and Baptists number less than 7,000 altogether.

A report summarizing the obligations of church members was adopted in London at a special meeting of the House of Laity of the Church Assembly, governing body of the Church of England. Prepared by a special committee on "The Discipline of The Laity," set up in 1946 under the chairmanship of the Rt. Rev. Harold E. Wynn, Bishop of Ely, the report contained six rules outlining the obligations of laymen. These are: (1) Regular Communion, (2) Attendance at public worship at least once on Sundays and on the greater holidays, (3) Discipline on Fridays and in Lent, (4) Regular contributions to the life and work of the Church, (5) Observance of the Church's marriage law, and (6) Approach to Holy Communion with penitence. Lenten and Friday "discipline" refers to the abstinence from meat on Fridays and the practice of some form of self-denial during Lent.

A series of conferences and study courses designed "to alert the social conscience of Christians" are scheduled for 1950 at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, near Geneva. Among the problems to be considered will be those of family life, state-operated and voluntary social service, the place of sociology in the strategy of the world-wide Church, and the challenge of biology to modern Christian thinking.

Protestant leaders in Indonesia are hopeful that American missionary organizations will divert their activities toward their country now that Communist-controlled areas of China are no longer accessible. According to the Rev. Alex Rotti, a member of the church council in Timor, two and a half million of Indonesia's total population of seventy-five million are Protestants. He said the influence of the Indonesian Protestants, whose number includes about a third of the nation's leading personalities, is proportionately far greater in the political and cultural sphere than that of any other group. At present he said the Protestant community in Indonesia comprises the Minahassa, Timor, and Molucca churches, which are independent, indigenous bodies, and the Protestant Church of the Western Archipelago, stretching over Java and Sumatra, with Dutch Eurasian and Dutch-speaking Indonesian members. In addition, he said, there are the Netherlands mission groups, including the East Java Church, with 100,000 members, who are all converted Mohammedans; the Batak Church, with 600,000 members; and the Posso Church on Celebes, with 20,000 adherents.

Religious freedom is guaranteed in India's new constitution adopted in New Delhi by the Constituent Assembly. The charter contains an article declaring that, "subject to public order, morality, and health, all persons are legally entitled to liberty of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice, and propagate their sacred beliefs."

A second edition of the revised Turkish version of the Bible has been published in Istanbul jointly by the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society. The first edition appeared in 1941. The revised Turkish Bible is printed in Latin script and in the new Turkish, which ignores many old Arabic words and includes a great number of revived idioms and new terms. The first Turkish Bible dates back to 1666. It was a translation made by Ali Bey, Polish-born former slave, who achieved fame after he had reached manhood and embraced the Islamic faith. His manuscript was sent to Leyden, Holland, to be printed, but its publication was delayed until 1827.

ALEX C. W. GUEBERT

## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE. By Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. Edited by Samuel G. Craig. With an Introduction by Cornelius Van Til. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia. 1949. 442 pages. \$3.75.

Conservative Bible students who received their theological training in the nineties of the past century, or in the first decades of the present century, remember with grateful hearts the name Benjamin B. Warfield, distinguished teacher and author, who was professor of systematic theology in Princeton Theological Seminary from 1886 until the year of his death in 1921. From his pen flowed a constant stream of scholarly articles and books in defense of Biblical truth and conservative Christianity sufficient to fill ten large volumes.

Professor Warfield lived in the era when negative Biblical criticism was fearfully attacking the traditional theology of the Church. In all those years he remained unshaken in his conviction that the Scriptures are the infallible Word of God, and he frequently gave expression to that conviction. Eight of his most scholarly essays on this subject are offered in the present volume. Those of us who remember our first contacts with Dr. Warfield's articles as we discovered them in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* and in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* can't help congratulating the publishers for making these essays available to the present generation and reviving the honored name — Benjamin B. Warfield.

Dr. Warfield did not live to see the day when the Theology of Crisis and other movements in Protestant thought made their impact on current theological thinking. Had he lived to see our day, he would have, without question, exposed their basic fallacies. To offset this gap between 1921, when Dr. Warfield died, and our day, Dr. Van Til, author of *The New Modernism*, an appraisal of the theology of Barth and Brunner, has supplied a lengthy introduction in which he meets the opponents of orthodoxy with their own weapons — philosophic reasonings. One appreciates his penetrating analysis, but one questions the validity of some of his conclusions. Dr. Warfield would have, we are certain, wielded the Sword of God's Spirit rather than the frail lance of the human mind and would have been chiefly concerned in demonstrating at what points present-day opponents of orthodoxy violate the clear Word of God.

The essays bear the impress of the author's Calvinistic approach to Scripture. But there is so much of value in these essays that a careful reading of them will prove a blessed adventure. PAUL M. BRETSCHER

JESUS. By Martin Dibelius. Translated by Charles B. Hedrick and Frederick C. Grant. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 160 pages, 5½×8. \$2.50.

When before November 11, 1947, the date of the death of Martin Dibelius, scholars of renown in Germany were enumerated anywhere, the name of this man was sure to be included. He was regarded one of the chief ornaments of the University of Heidelberg, where he taught in the New Testament Department. Works from his pen that have made him widely known are the *Commentary on James* in Meyer's series (1920), *From Tradition to Gospel* (1935), *Gospel Criticism and Christology* (1935), *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (1936), *The Sermon on the Mount* (lectures delivered here in America in 1937 and published 1940), and *The Message of Jesus Christ* (1939). In the latter year appeared, too, the work which here lies before us in an excellent English translation. Dibelius, who was 64 years old when he died, his health undermined by the privations of the war era, was an immensely learned and versatile man; besides, he possessed rare powers of presentation. He is probably best known as an exponent of the new form of criticism based on what is called *Formgeschichte*. In addition to the books of his which *ex professo* deal with this type of research, his work on the Sermon on the Mount and the present volume will serve as an excellent introduction to this method of treating the Gospel material. It may interest the readers to know that he was a cousin of the prominent Bishop Dibelius of Berlin, who visited our country in 1948.

This book on Jesus consists of ten chapters having these headings respectively: 1. Jesus in History; 2. The Sources; 3. People, Land, Descent; 4. The Movement Among the Masses; 5. The Kingdom of God; 6. The Signs of the Kingdom; 7. The Son of Man; 8. Man's Status Before God; 9. The Opposing Forces; 10. Faith and Unfaith. A bibliography, an index of subjects, and an index of passages conclude the little volume. The Table of Contents sounds innocent enough and might create the impression that merely another Life of Christ is submitted. But one does not have to read far to notice that the work is characterized by an extremely negative, skeptical tendency. Form criticism comes with its heavy tread, and one fair flower after the other in the garden of the Evangelists is crushed. Let me endeavor to give the reader an idea of Dibelius' views and methods.

After some interesting observations on the distinction between faith and history the writer's special ideas begin to appear as he examines the sources. The Gospels, especially the synoptic Gospels, present the tradition current in the Church about Jesus at the time of their composition. The various sections of these works must not be regarded as being of equal his-

torical value. How was the Gospel material preserved? We find in these little writings sayings of Jesus that are reported in connection with a certain event, like the coming of the embassy of John the Baptist. Next there are sayings of His that are transmitted without such a setting, merely as words of Jesus, usually gathered in collections like the Sermon on the Mount. That they were preserved is due to the special interest attaching to them for the early Christians, who found in them directives for their faith and life. Now and then sayings may have been ascribed to Jesus that were in reality not spoken by him, but were merely similar to something He had said. To all this material must be added the long narrative parables like that of the Prodigal Son; carefully detailed examination will have to show whether these compositions are preserved in their original or in a slightly altered form. The stories *about* Jesus in the Gospels can be divided into several classes, too. There are, in the first place, stories which helped the early Christians in their mission work, such as the blessing of the little children. They may be called paradigms. Alongside of them one finds stories that have a wealth of picturesque detail, like the narrative of the Gadarene demoniac. Here extraneous material may have been added occasionally. These stories are called tales. In addition the Passion narrative must be mentioned; in its general outline it is trustworthy. The scientific student has to decide what in the Gospels is the old tradition about Jesus, and in this tradition again the earliest layer, as the most reliable, must be sought out. — These few sentences of mine give the reader, I admit, but an imperfect idea of the technique followed in the *formgeschichtliche Schule*. But enough has been said to demonstrate its utterly negative character. It is with such presuppositions that Dibelius approaches the various Gospel accounts and arrives at his conclusions as to what is historical. What results is simply a naturalistic picture of Jesus; the old Rationalists, in spite of their ridiculous methods, could not have done better in their attempts to please human reason. The relationship of the *formgeschichtliche Schule* with the negative critics of 1775 to 1825 is hidden, because the former employs a formidable technique of literary and historical criticism. Ostensibly the adherents of this school follow the methods of true science. It is only when one delves more deeply into their endeavors that it becomes apparent that the actual basis of their work is not science, but highly subjective speculation. Phenomena are interpreted in a certain way, but the candid reader will say that a different interpretation would be just as plausible. One is amazed to see that the view of David Friedrich Strauss, that the Old Testament suggested and shaped much in the tradition about Jesus' career, here has come back to life. With sadness one observes that the message of the Cross with its promise of life through the death of the divine Sin-bearer has entirely disappeared. Dibelius admits that Jesus viewed Himself as the future "Ruler, Messiah, or Redeemer." But what does it mean? The final note of Dibelius is that "again and again from the story of Jesus has come the call for decision" (p. 147). Thank God,



the poor sinner has the Gospel to console him and does not have to rely on *Formgeschichte*.

Apart from initiating the reader into the method of *Formgeschichte*, the book will repay study on account of the many valuable historical observations that are embodied in the discussion. The chapter on "People, Land, Descent" abounds in worth-while information. W. ARNDT

PROGRESS OF DOCTRINE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Thomas D. Bernard. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 258 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ . \$2.00. Zondervan Publishing House, 244 pages,  $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . \$1.75. The Eerdmans edition is a reproduction from the plates of the first American edition published by Gould and Lincoln in 1867. The Zondervan edition, with an introduction by W. B. Smith, is reprinted from the plates of the American Tract Society.

This book contains the eight lectures delivered by Bernard in 1864 on the Bampton Foundation (established at Oxford University in 1780). Of the 133 volumes comprising the annual lectures the present volume is rated by many as one of the best and undoubtedly will lead to a deeper appreciation of the marvelous unity and divine origin of the New Testament. At first glance the title seems to be misleading, as though the author favored the Ritschlian historical theory, that development of doctrine continues throughout the era of the Christian Church, or that, as A. Harnack held, the Epistles already belong to history of doctrine. This the author rejects in unmistakable terms. (Pp. 36, 37. We read the Eerdmans edition.) To him the progress of doctrine in church history is only a progress of man's apprehension of the truth, not a progress in divine communication (pp. 31—34). The author's basic contention is that the entire New Testament presents the divine plan in beautiful harmony; that the New Testament in the sequence of the chronological writings is merely like the unfolding of a rosebud into full bloom; and that the entire New Testament is the Savior's divine revelation, which, however, dare not be restricted to the words spoken in the flesh. Divine revelation of the New Testament comes to us in 1) the words of Christ spoken with His lips; 2) the words of Christ given through the Spirit. Therefore Christ is to our author both the Source and the Subject of the "progressively revealed" doctrine. The synoptic Gospels present the facts of Christ's life; the Gospel of St. John presents the glory of Christ in a more distinct and articulate manner; the Acts serve as an introduction to the Epistles, in which statements "which might seem of doubtful meaning in the former stage have found a fixed interpretation. Suggestions of thought in the one have become habits of thought in the other. What were only facts there have become doctrines here." (P. 46.) There can be no orderly progress in doctrine unless there is *one* Author (p. 47); in fact, there can be no *doctrine* without *facts*, the *fact* of Christ's death and resurrection is basic for the *doctrine* concerning His death and resurrection. "The facts must be com-



pleted, before they are clearly interpreted and fully applied" (p. 48). The author points out that already in the Gospels Christ goes from the facts to the doctrine, for a comparison of the Synoptics and John shows a wonderful unity and harmony, and at the same time a definite progression. And yet the revelation in the four Gospels is of such a nature that the reader is almost compelled to expect further progress in the revelation, because the Gospel narrative creates the desire for a clear reply to certain questions that have arisen during the reading of the facts. According to the author two things stand out in the Gospels. First, they include the substance of all Christian doctrine, but even in their progression from Mark to John show that they do not bear the character of finality. Second, the Savior Himself indicates that the revelation is to be progressive, for in reaching the highest point of His earthly task He opens a second stage by the promise of further instruction through the Holy Ghost (pp. 79—81). The very form (obscure statements) and method (parables) of Christ's personal teaching and the specific promise of the Holy Spirit prompt us to look forward to a further unfolding of the doctrine. The first step in the second stage of Christ's revelation is recorded in Acts, which links the founding of the Church to the Gospel (p. 103). In a brief resume of the Epistles the author shows that since the facts recorded in the Gospels were either imperfectly grasped or actually perverted or misapplied (p. 157), it becomes necessary to set the truth forth more fully in the Epistles. Thus the author presents the "progress of doctrine" from "the beginning to the end of the New Testament, from the cradle at Bethlehem to the city of God" (p. 224). The book is recommended for careful study. It will prove very suggestive in the preparation for Bible class work.

F. E. MAYER

NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT. REVELATION. By Albert Barnes.  
Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 464 pages, 8×6. \$3.50.

This is the last of the *Barnes Notes* volumes published by the Baker Book House in enlarged type, handy format, and handsome appearance. Students of the Bible who have procured for their library the preceding volumes will no doubt purchase also this final one. It is true: *Barnes' Notes* do not solve the problems of prophecy in the book; but that is something which no commentary does. Nor are the *Notes* to be accepted in their entirety; they, for example, defend the millennialistic conception of Rev. 20:1 ff. But there is in this volume so much helpful comment, so much valuable suggestion and guidance for Christian believers, and so much edifying devotional material that the reader will gratefully use *Barnes* also on Revelation. The reviewer believes that the last book of the New Testament is studied far too little by Lutheran Christians and that, while its place among the *Antilegomena* cannot be denied, it is nevertheless a book so grand that it properly closes the canon, since it presents a *theologia viae* and a *theologia vitae* that are most necessary for God's chil-

dren in this perplexing eschatological age. It is indeed very true what an exegete has said about Revelation: "What we can understand in it, is truly glorious; what is beyond our comprehension, is forever challenging."

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**BIBLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA AND DICTIONARY, CRITICAL AND EXPOSITORY.**

Compiled and written by A. R. Fausset. Zondervan Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. No date given (1949?). 753 pages. \$4.95.

This is a reprint of a work published decades ago by the eminent Bible student Dr. Fausset, who is perhaps best known because he was co-author, with Drs. Jamieson and Brown, of the still widely used *Commentary on the Whole Bible*.

Being a reprint from old plates, the book has some defects. The type is very small, and the materials have not been brought up to date. One deplores also that the book does not contain a critical introduction. On the credit side, it may be said that Fausset's work is still in many respects a very useful Bible dictionary. The book bears the impress of the author's fine scholarship and his wide acquaintance with Biblical data. One is particularly grateful that the author does not merely supply information on Biblical names, places, and historical matters, but that he also includes in his work carefully done essays on doctrinal matters such as the Antichrist, Creation, Inspiration, Justification, and Predestination. These essays may still be read with much profit. The articles which this reviewer examined reflect Dr. Fausset's profound reverence for the Bible as the inspired Word of God.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

**ATLAS OF THE BIBLE LANDS.** C. S. Hammond & Company. New York. 32 pages, 9½ × 12½. 50 cents.

In this new atlas one finds, in the first place, 32 colored maps pertaining to the world of the Bible. The last one of them presents Palestine as it is now divided under the terms of the Israeli-Jordanian and Israeli-Egyptian armistice agreements. The other maps, as would be expected, deal with the early history of the world and the Roman Empire. Those pertaining to Palestine are quite detailed. In addition the atlas is richly illustrated. In it are included photographs of scenes and ancient remains in Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Italy, and other countries mentioned in the Bible. Every Bible student will enjoy paging through this little atlas and studying the maps and the pictures. The price is extremely reasonable.

W. ARNDT

**GIVING A REASON FOR OUR HOPE.** By Carl F. H. Henry. W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. 1949. 96 pages. \$1.50.

Dr. Henry, who has become known as a staunch defender of the Christian faith, offers in this book his answers to many vexing religious questions addressed to him by college, university, and seminary students. A

sampling of these questions includes: Is God simply an imagination of ours? How can I tell whether God exists before my idea of Him? Why did modern theology disregard special revelation? Did Plato and Aristotle agree with any of the ideas of Jesus? Is not the doctrine of the Trinity quite unintelligible, since there are no empirical analogies to it?

The author's replies to these and other questions reveal a sincere endeavor on his part honestly to face up to these questions, a profound understanding of older and modern philosophical views, and a keen sense of what is or is not in accord with Scriptural truth. Our college and university students will derive benefit from carefully reading this book, and our pastors will gather from this book excellent materials to convince the gainsayers.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

**THE SEARCH FOR LIFE'S MEANING.** By Alfred G. Fisk. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. 1949. 249 pages. \$3.00.

This is a noble attempt by a well-informed student of philosophy who, incidentally, is also a master of style and diction, to support theism with his version of idealism. As an idealist, Mr. Fisk exposes the inadequacy of materialism to give a satisfying account of the nature of the universe. He then proceeds to show, in brilliantly written chapters, that ours is an ordered, teleological universe, that values have objective reality, that one is therefore compelled to posit a higher being as the cause of this universe, and that this being is a personal being "plus." In his discussion of the problem of evil, the author successfully defends his idealism against "unreasonable" solutions of this problem. He rejects absolute determinism, "proves" the immortality of the soul, and, in a closing chapter, indicates the relevancy of his position for the Christian life. A large number of footnotes which, though appended in the rear, must not be overlooked, provide further explications of many points discussed in the body of the text. A well-prepared index increases the value of the book.

In general, the author limits himself to philosophic inquiry and only infrequently impinges on the theological realm. Unfortunately, however, the author, in these few instances, enters far enough afield in theological matters to challenge the theologian. In his attempt to square his philosophical viewpoints with Biblical theology, Mr. Fisk does not do justice to the miracles recorded in Scripture. Allowing, with the author, for faith in religion as the corollary of hypothesis in science, one asks: Why should it be wholly out of order to believe that God who, as the author admits, is the cause of all cosmic laws, has occasionally, at His discretion, suspended these very laws and does so today? Or why should prayer be merely an act of "giving ourselves to God" rather than an appeal to Him for help? The author also fails to point out that Christian theism cannot escape predicating a triune God, that this God is both immanent and transcendent, that He became wholly "anthropomorphic" when the "Logos" became incarnate, that the Christian faith in immortality includes faith in the resurrection of

the body, and that only those who are "in Christ" and live in His fellowship are empowered by the Spirit to respond to God's love toward them. An observation appears to be in place at this point. Whenever philosophy invades the realm of Christian theology, it must adjust itself to it rather than expect that theology will adjust itself to philosophy. One who dares to speak with a degree of authority on both, philosophy and theology, reason and faith, must be aware of three possible approaches: 1) to begin with philosophy, but to allow theology to act as the correcting and complementing teacher of philosophy; 2) to maintain as clean-cut a division between philosophy and theology as this is humanly possible; 3) to make theology subservient to philosophy. One fears that Mr. Fisk chose the third course. He will, therefore, have to anticipate that some readers will regret that he failed to do justice to theology.

But Mr. Fisk's book has decided merits. It is a remarkably clear presentation of its theses, and its quotations from modern scientists and philosophers are numerous and, in some instances, not readily accessible elsewhere. Readers not familiar with fundamental philosophic issues, and with the attitude of modern scientists toward religion, will find this book very useful.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

**HIGHWAYS OF PHILOSOPHY.** By Merle William Boyer. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia. 1949. 352 pages. \$3.50.

This is one of those books which one is tempted to review before reading. From the expressive jacket cover to the last note on page 352: "Type used in this book Body, 12 on 13 and 10 on 10 Garamond Display, Garamond bold," the volume is a thing of beauty and another grand slam of the Muhlenberg Press. A rapid reading of the book confirms one's first impressions. Here is a text in philosophy which ought to appeal to everyone who has the slightest inclination to discover what philosophy is all about. The unique approach to the vast subject, the organization of the materials, and, in particular, Appendix I ("An open forum as a laboratory for philosophy"), in which the author offers for discussion alternative solutions to philosophic problems, all these factors contribute to the readability and usefulness of the book. Mr. Boyer's text, which is designed to help also Christians who day by day face philosophic problems of all kinds, will find many grateful readers in both Christian and non-Christian circles.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

**JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE.** By Laurence W. Miller. W. A. Wilde Co., Boston, Mass. 89 pages, 8×5½. \$1.50.

**THE JESUS PAUL PREACHED.** By Perry F. Haines. W. A. Wilde Co., Boston, Mass. 179 pages, 8×5½. \$2.00.

These two books discuss Christological subjects of paramount importance from the viewpoint of Christian apologetics. The first, *Jesus Christ Is Alive*, is a clear, well-written, and Scriptural presentation of Christ's resurrection,

showing its absolute certainty, its significance for Christ Himself, as proving His deity and Messiahship, and for the Christian believer, to whom our Lord's resurrection is a pledge of his own resurrection and immortality. We recommend this book wholeheartedly for study especially by Christian laymen.

The second book, *The Jesus Paul Preached*, sets forth Jesus as the pre-existent Son of God, who with the Father created the world, was born of a virgin, became true man to execute the appointed work of redemption, was absolutely sinless, fulfilled the prophecies concerning the promised Messiah, wrought true miracles, was crucified as our High Priest, was raised from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of the Father. These fundamental doctrines of traditional theology the writer exhibits and defends on the basis of Scripture, which he believes to be God's Word *in toto* and therefore the only source and rule of faith. The reviewer, however, could not agree with a number of statements in the book as, for example, that Jesus actually was buried twice in the same tomb (p. 120 f.), that in John 13:10 He means to say that he who is bathed in His blood needs only to have his feet washed, which pick up the defilement in the daily Christian walk (p. 159), that there is a place in the heart of the earth, called *sheol* and *hades*, into which all spirits went at death prior to Christ's ascension (p. 174), that Paradise first was in hades, but after Christ's ascension is in heaven (p. 176), etc. The writer thus weaves into his otherwise Scriptural exposition speculations that are not taught in the Bible. The book, therefore, must be read with considerable care; it is not always doctrinally sound.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

KIRCHLICHES JAHRBUCH FUER DIE EVANGELISCHE KIRCHE IN DEUTSCHLAND 1933—1944. Herausgegeben von Joachim Beckmann. 60.—71. Jahrgang. C. Bertelsmann, Guetersloh. 1948. 533 pages. DM 15.

The last yearbook of the Evangelical Church of Germany appeared in 1932. Further publications of this historical record were impossible since, beginning with 1933, the Evangelical Church of Germany became involved in conflicts with the German Christians and with Nazi authorities and since not long after the outbreak of World War II in 1939 publication of religious literature virtually ceased. The present volume attempts to survey the period 1933—1944. The editor promises that another volume will soon appear covering the years 1945—1948. After that, the yearbook will again appear annually.

This volume, which surveys the trials of the Evangelical Church of Germany in one of the darkest periods of German history, will always be of value to church historians. Here one finds reprints of a large number of documents such as announcements and reports by German evangelical bishops, proclamations by the Third Reich, confessions of faith, and statements dealing with burning theological issues. Here one sees in action great minds which largely determined the course of events in the Evan-



gelical Church of Germany, such as Bishops Wurm, Marahrens, Meiser, Sasse, and others. As one reads these documents, one begins to understand what it means to suffer for one's faith, and one thanks God for the courageous testimony which these fearless confessors bore in times when Scriptural and confessional loyalties forbade them to preach revolt against the existing State but also compelled them to declare and publicize in unmistakable language their opposition to every effort by traitors in the Church and by tyrants in the State to suppress the free proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paragraphs in this book dealing with Church-State relationships and with the rights and responsibilities of Christian pastors and congregations have timeless significance. There are, finally, pages in this volume which move one to tears and remind one of the unconquerable faith of Christian martyrs in the first three centuries of our era.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

THE NEW SCHAFF-HERZOG ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Volume I. 500 pages, 9½×6½. \$4.50.

This reprint of the standard religious encyclopedia in the English language is to appear in thirteen volumes. The publisher promises a new volume each month until the reprint is completed. Following the reprinting, Volumes XIV and XV are to be added bringing supplementary material. Dr. Lefferts A. Loetscher, Associate Professor of Church History of Princeton Theological Seminary, will be the editor of the supplementary volumes.

Schaff-Herzog has always, and very correctly so, been considered a *sine qua non* for a pastor's library. It has been out of print for a number of years. It is good to know that a new edition will now be on the market and that the encyclopedia will be brought up-to-date by the addition of the supplementary volumes.

LOUIS J. SIECK

THE FORMING OF AN AMERICAN TRADITION. A Re-Examination of Colonial Presbyterianism. By Leonard J. Trinterud. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 352 pages. \$6.50.

The author of this book is Associate Professor of Church History at McCormick Theological Seminary. He prepared this volume in preparation of the 250th anniversary of Presbyterianism in the United States. It covers approximately the first hundred years and is divided into two parts. The first is the agony of birth. The second is the shaping of the future and closes with the founding of the General Assembly. The author has made every effort to present a well-documented history of these first hundred years in which he shows well how American Presbyterianism was born. He does not hesitate to tell in detail the controversies through which the Church had to pass. Everyone interested in the history of Presbyterianism must know this excellent book.

W. G. POLACK



